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A PORTRAIT.

BY JOEL BENTON.

It was beauty, such as blesses
Him who finds it, filled her face:
Dainty rounded cheeks, contesting
Which was whitest, lily-white,
White Love, which bestowed or caresses,
Made her heart its bridegroom.

II.

Splendors of the morn's morning,
Wafts that stir tree-bending skies,
Wonder-lights of starry evening,
Mischief sparkled in her eyes;
From her lips, which closed for warning,
Full bewildering, to rise.

III.

She could dart the tenderest glances,
Hold the witness without heart;
Sweet surprises, dreamy fancies
Grew about her; You would say
Something richer than romance in
Kept her life-scene in its way!

THE RIVAL SISTERS.

By ELIMA A. DUFFY,

AUTHOR OF "THE TWIN SISTERS," "HER "WHITE HANDED SISTER," ETC.

CHAPTER XI.

MRS. BLAKE'S SITTER DISCOVERY.

Later in the evening Estelle Landry awoke from the long trance in which she had lain, and looked vaguely around the room in which she found herself. She seemed to make a faint struggle to remember something, but the effort was too much for her clouded faculties, and she fretfully said forth:

"Where am I? What am I doing here? I don't like this place. Please take me away; nobody knows me."

"Why am you? I never saw you before—and I hate this mean looking place."

"Don't you know me? Don't remember your own mother, Hester," replied Mrs. Blake, with well-simulated sadness.

The girl's large black eyes opened to their utmost width, and she stared in a dazed way at the speaker, as she whispered:

"I had a mother, of course—everybody has; but I—I don't remember much about her. What did you call me, ma'am? I've forgotten my name again, and is she's going to be cross, I don't love you."

"Your name you will soon learn again, Hester, and you will gradually come to remember me too, I trust. We are going to live together, and be all to each other you ever knew."

"No we? Don't hope we shan't stay here. I like pretty things, and I don't see anything that isn't hideous—that is, except you, ma'am. You are good looking enough for me, but I'm strange that I should find out that you're my mother! If you am, I wish you would bring me something to eat, for I feel rather hungry."

"I will have food brought to you soon," replied, and as soon as you are stronger I will take you to my home. You will find that I have a wonderful fondness for you, and your poor mind is still affected by it."

Estelle raised her hand to her head, and softly said:

"Yes, that must have been the way of it, for my head aches yet, and I—I can't remember something that I know I ought to think of. I am very glad to find a mother, though it's rather late in the day for me to do so."

"You will remember all about me when you get better. There, dear, you must not talk any more. You must be very quiet, that you may get strong enough to be taken away from this place."

A smile of childish pleasure came into the wan face of the poor deranged girl, and she submissively said:

"I will be good if you will really take me to a better place. I like the house at all events—don't you? And music in my parlors, but I don't see any piano here. May be you have a guitar, though; I can play on that too, and sing. I—I used to sing for—for—somebody, but I can't think who it was. Strange, isn't it, mother?"

"It will all come back to you after a little. If you will have patience, I will go now, and bring you something nice to eat."

"Yes, I'll wait patiently. I shall do better when I have had a cup of tea."

She said this with a graceful sweetness that shone even through the ruin in which her faculties were shrouded. All knowledge of her own identity seemed to have slept from her mind, but her loving and grateful nature was spared even by the changed condition.

As Mrs. Blake would have turned away to go for refreshments, the girl caught her hand, took her hand to her lips, and kissed it, saying tenderly in her half-severed way, as she asked:

"Is it really true that you are my mother? It seems strange that you have come to me so suddenly, when I didn't know that you lived. Kiss me before you go away; I am very fond of you already."

Mrs. Blake shrank from this ordeal, and she could scarcely suppress a shudder as she bent down and gave a slight caress, which barely touched the lips to the fair brow of the girl, and with a quick move although to assist.

"I hope you are indeed fond of me Hester. It would be strange if you did not love your own mother," she said, as she rose.

She extricated herself from the clinging hands, and, with a quick step, left the room, and went into the large, gaudy parlor that adjoined the room. Estelle looked after her till it grew dimmed, but quite satisfied with the new relation she had found. She vainly tried to collect her scattered thoughts, and comprehend the new phase of affairs. Memory was utterly paralyzed, and she found it impossible to recall any event of her past existence.

She was very weary, and as she lay back in a soft languor pervaded her frame, and like Tennyson's lotus eaters, she only asked to be let alone, that she might glide softly down to the sea of oblivion that awaited her.

Mason came softly into the room, and stood watching her some moments before he made his presence known. When he at length approached the bed, the young girl opened her eyes, and fastening a dreamy gaze on him, said:

"Are you my father? I have found a mother, and of course I must have a father. I can't understand it all, but may be I shall when I get stronger."

"No; even when you are better, you will remember all, that is necessary," he soothingly replied. "You have been very ill, you know, and I am your physician. The sea has defeated your brain, but you will soon be quite well, and then you will be happy living with your mother as devoted to you."

A faint quiver of pain passed over the sensitive mouth, and she said:

"Are you sure I have no father? It seems to me that I had one once, and he was very good to me, too—somehow I've lost him, and don't know where to look for him. Perhaps I can find him in what has become of me? If you are a doctor, you ought to know."

Mason was not daunted by her words, but he was a little alarmed at this effort of memory, faint and dubious as it was, and he felt her pulse, and said:

"You are a little feverish yet, and I must use my best skill in your behalf. After you have some refreshment—I will go for it—something that will make you forget all these things that trouble you now."

"I don't want to forget. I'd like better to remember; but what is the use? I feel very happy. I believe I could float away as the birds do, if I only had wings. I don't want to think about anything—thinking is tiresome; don't you find it so?"

"Sometimes. But here comes your supper, and you must eat some of it before I give you a sleeping draught."

Estelle came in with a waiter, followed by Mrs. Blake, and the open-mouthed astonishment the girl was then displayed at Estelle was almost indictrous. She hastened to place her burden on the foot of the bed, and kept exclaiming violently till Mrs. Blake explained to her that the young lady had forgotten all, and Estelle seemed to doubt the fact, she was so much relieved. She was told that the lady was her brother's fiancée, and that she was sitting by his self-gentleman.

The girl was quickly on the door, opened it a few inches, and looked in to see the hand of Miss Blake vainly waving as she pointed to her slumbering charge. The door swung to, and Estelle came back with a kindred smile of delight on her simple face.

Estelle had been left in the maintenance with astonishment, for she did not seem aware that she had formed the taste of the case, but a few musical laughs escaped her lips, and she said:

"What funny people you are. Can't you speak out, in place of doing all that setting? Oh that girl is give me my tea before it gets cold. I don't like cold tea."

"I will get it for you my dear," said Mrs. Blake. "This is Eunice Barker, and she is a friend of mine, who has come to wait on you; but she don't know what we say, so of course can't speak herself. You will soon get used to her, and then you can converse well with her."

"I am not going to twist my face up and make flourishes with my hands, if that is all the way she speaks. I'll get my tea myself," Estelle rather petulantly. "I want people to talk like other people, and not like a lot of monkeys. Now, you can go, for I'm tired, and I suppose it will come right after a while."

"If you can, my dear, I will go, and I will prepare a nice draught for you that will make you all right."

Mrs. Blake raised the pillows that supported the sick girl's head, and she eagerly drank the tea that was offered her, and dutifully ate the nourishing food that was given her, and then brought her medicine.

Eunice hovered around her with an expression of real interest, and Estelle soon noticed it, and when she put the tea-cupboard down she said, with a gleam of her old self:

"You are good, if you can't talk, and I like you better than I am glad you're going to live. Come, now, it's of no use to make that face, mother, because I don't like you, and I'm so pleased to hear that I've found you only to understand each other without that."

The dark girl raised the slender hand to her lips, and then placed it tenderly on the coverlet, pointing at the same time to her heart, and beating her head as if in astonishment. Estelle nodded, as if she understood the implied devotion to her wishes, and with a weary sigh said:

"I wish that her hand was here, and you lived even to think. Good night, now I want to rest and get better; for I know there is something for me to do that I can't bring back to my mind."

"Take this draught, and perhaps it will help you to finally your thoughts," Mrs. Blake, advancing from the closet at which he had been preparing a second dose of the laudanum.

Esther took the glass from his hand, and with a little nod, and smile that almost unnerved him, here as he was, drank off the potent potion, and with a sparkle of merriment, said:

"What a nice doctor you are, so give what is not nauseous to the taste. I am going to sleep, and when I wake I shall be well and dressed, saying will be ready, and you and I shall know all about the things that have come from me so strangely."

She sank back and closed her eyes, and Mrs. Blake made signs to Eunice to remove the tray to the kitchen, and return to her duties in the room. She left unobserved, however, and when she was gone, Mrs. Blake drew the curtains around the bed, and sat down to watch by the effect of the potion. The first one seems only to have dulled her memory for a time. Something more potent must be tried on her, or she will give us trouble yet.

"Have no fears, Mrs. Blake. I understand well I am about. I don't wish to destroy the girl's mind entirely, if she can be rendered harmless in any other way. I am not a fiend, as you believe. Indeed, I hope she will yet be able to gather up again unless I will be to be a person for sudden to the drug she has taken, but I shall never be called on to use it if Estelle can be conquer with one. Since Miss Landry is to remain under your care for some days to come, it is better for you that she shall not be made stupid and unconscious. You will find your advantage in her up and down I shall have scarred my own ends, and you will be free to act as you please with her, and I shall be one of your most ordinary brightness. It is a pity to be forced to this step, but I see no other way, and there is no other course left."

"You pity her then," said Mrs. Blake, in a low, terse tone, "and you may shrink from doing what is necessary to her safety and your own. I tell you, sir, I have but one feeling for her, and that is hatred. She has come between me and my son, and I shall be forced to treat her as kindly as if I were indeed my mother."

Mason coolly surveyed her, and coldly said:

"I am sorry that your feelings toward this poor girl are so bitterly hostile, for there must be no fear in your acting. Madam, if you give others the slightest cause to suspect your duplicity, you will be ruined, and I will be ruined with you. Do you know what that would bring on us all?"

The woman laughed harshly, and clasped her hands around her slender throat with a significant motion.

"Just is what it will bring you to; to Hester and me as we go down together, after a wasted solitary confinement and hard labor for life. Now you see my game clearly enough, and will accept; what she would do I may not say, but I know what I will do, and you must do as I do, or we shall go down to ruin together."

Mason shuddered at this picture.

"Don't talk, Madam," he said, "but and talk in that way, or I may be tempted to back out from the whole thing. It is not too late to reconsider, and undo all that we have done."

His words calmed Mrs. Blake at once. She saw that she had gone too far, and that she must not drive him to desperation, for he could speak in this way. I am control my thrilling nerves, and I will be calm. I will do my part as perfectly as you will yours. If you will consider, Hester Blake were dead to you again."

"I don't regret that I possess other means of bringing both you and her to terms," said Mason, coldly. "Let us understand each other, and we must from no more to bring other's dislike to grips upon you; but as you believe that your daughter retains the passion I feel for her, you are quite safe. Attempt to turn her against me, and there is nothing—nothing that I would not do to avenge my disappointment. Even if I ruined myself in crushing you, I would not hesitate; for what should I have to live for then? Hester Blake were dead to me."

"Good heavens, Julian! how passionate and unreasonable you are! Cast fly of at such a tangent that I scarcely know how to deal with you. After having accepted you as my son, it is not likely that I shall attempt to change my daughter's feelings toward you. I trust you to be happy in your union, and bound to-gether as you are, I hope that you may have faith in each other, or there will be no safety for any of us."

"I beg pardon for my rudeness, Mrs. Blake, but your threat about Hester made me forget myself. You have such an influence over her that you can make her do almost anything. She has given me such pledges as should assure me of her good faith, but I am too much in love with her to be content with that. I hope will never come. To win her for my wife, I am willing to do and dare what most men would shrink from, and my doubt engendered by you is naturally distasteful to me."

Mason moved away from her, and again made a careful examination of his patient. She was already sleeping heavily, with half closed eyes and parted lips. He grimly said:

"I shall not disturb her again to-night, and in the morning she must be given what will be sufficient to counteract the wonderful effect that must be in readiness for her. We will keep her in that condition till she is removed to your cottage and safely installed there. Then she can be gradually allowed to revive to a consciousness of the life around her. You had better go in to Eunice, and give her the necessary directions for the night. I will be well enough to get up and dress myself in the morning, and then I will see you and arrange for our future movements."

"She is so simple she will never suspect anything. Besides, she should she? She knows nothing of our motives for making the change you intend to make, Julian."

Mrs. Blake went into the kitchen, and Mason was alone with the unconscious girl. He said aloud, He then took Hester's pulse between his fingers, and as he felt the throbbing of the veins, he muttered to himself:

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"Yes, I am sorry that I have been sure of this girl's love, for I am sure she will not suspect. I trust that I shall attempt to change my daughter's feelings toward you. I trust you to be happy in your union, and bound together as you are, I hope that you may have faith in each other, or there will be no safety for any of us."

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of the Omnipotent Being who will judge between us."

If a glance could have withered, that which shot from the large black eyes of Landry would have annihilated the woman who dared speak. There was horror, loathing, and intense despair in its wild expression, and he started up, and sat erect in his bed, as he waved the arm he could still use, in a menacing manner.

"You—you here?" he exclaimed, in a loud, harsh voice. "How dare you enter this room? How dare you profane the sacred character you have assumed for the purpose of intruding upon a presence that was forbidden you? Leave me, woman, in the name of my God of life, and in death you persecute me still. So I command you to leave me, and I command you by the presence of a murdered man!"

Hagar's eyes blazed back defiance, and she tauntingly said:

"You are in no position now to enforce your will. You trampled me under your feet in other days, and made me submit to the fate you decreed me, but now our parts are change d. You are in my power, and I in yours, and I will not stir from you back-step for step, for all the adjurations you have poured into my cap and Caleb Macon's ears."

The features of Landry were blanched to the hue of death, and his black eyes were almost furiously from their pallid setting as he slowly asked,

"By whose countenance were you permitted to enter here? If Hester or her betrothed husband asked you, it will be the worse for them, for in that case I will give her nothing. I will not be claimed here in this morning will be given, unless it is signed and witnessed, and sealed with my own hand."

"No one requested Mrs. Hagar to enter here, sir," she mockingly asked; "but let me assure you that it is a matter of indifference to me, and also to my daughter, whether that paper is validated or not. We have settled our place, and have agreed them as you may. you will be powerless to prevent them from being carried into effect. Hester will not accept your bounty, and I will not be made unnecessarily unhappy by her; she will not do what is here, in justice at least—the half of the estate which is hers by right of your own children."

"Woman! what do you mean by that? Ah! my God! have I fallen into a den of thieves? Is there no one to help me?"

This came broken suddenly, and he fell back on his pillow, exhausted by his effort.

"No one responded Mrs. Hagar, with stern emphasis. "You are in this room alone with your business, entirely at my mercy, and that of those who are willing to do all that I wish. The darling daughter on whom you have lavished so much indulgence has striken into silence by the imperious but loyal love of husband. She will never more walk the earth in pride, looking down in scorn upon the sister whom you have made subservient to her commands. In place of that sister, she will find a husband in distant places, and the child of Caleb Macon's eldest will be able to distinguish the true one from her counterfeit."

The listener felt that the shock of this announcement would be the last he should ever life; he knew that the death cloth was already on his visage, for he felt the chill of its clinging strength, and said, with solemn emphasis:

"If you consummate this wickedness, and leave to you, and to the imposter who will take the place of my darling, only misery and malediction. God is over all, and he will not suffer such a change to be accomplished, even in this world."

Mrs. Blake unclosed her lips to reply, but Landry raised his hand and, suddenly, a shadow passed over his sunken face, and with effort he summoned

"O Father in Heaven, whose cat is always open to those who call on thee in sincerity and pray. Thou to watch over my unfortunate child, and to forgive her for the baseness which she was compelled by her wicked mother to do; bring home to them the evil they have done, and make them a bulwark being who have injured, and restore her to her own. That Thou will do this in Thy own good time, I believe, and I resign my spirit to Thy holy keeping. Amen."

With the last word the fearful shadow had left the livid lips, and the wrung spirit escaped from the fearful torture at the hands of the miscreant foe who stood above him.

Hagar remained where she was, as him many moments with an expression of contemptuous scorn that was terrible in its intensity. With folded arms, she stood and watched.

It is over! The life for which I would once have given my own has departed, and I am on earth, and here I stand, exulting in the knowledge that my revenge is sated. He never loved me. I know that he spoke the truth in his dying moments, for I read it in his face, and I do not believe that he will be much more true to his plighted faith in the world to which he has gone. I thrust him away, in the mad hope that he would return to me; but he would not, and I have been avenged at last, and that is something."

She turned away, took up the discarded weapon, and, with a firm step, passed out of the second door, and, though her head was not quite steady, she walked

After a few moments she returned to the adjoining apartment, and briefly said to the two who sat at the open door:

"All is over. We are now free to carry out plans into effect."

CHAPTER XII.

AN UNEXPECTED ARRIVAL.

The two to whom Mrs. Hagar spoke arose, and Macon repeated:

"All over. I did not think he would die before midnight, and it is scarcely ten o'clock. I am glad that you were present, Mrs. Blake, and hastened the catastrophe. It seemed a fitting punishment that he should perish under the hand by turning upon him."

She looked at the speaker coldly, and said:

"I had no desire to be present at his extremity. Let that suffice. Go in to him now, and receive from his lips the proofs that he was not murdered by Hagar's own hand. What is done, we will remember, and refer to it no more, and we will be silent."

He silently obeyed her, and Mrs. Blake took down from the shelf the lamp which had burned her fate in her hands. The daughter had just risen from the shoulder, and softly said:

"It must have been a severe trial to you to see him die, mother, for you loved him once."

There was a low, sarcastic laugh from Mrs. Blake vacantly said:

"Did he reproach you because you wished to be near him at such a time? I hope you did not say anything that could lead to him in his last moments, mother."

"No, I did not from the provocation. He declared that he had never loved me, and that I always consoled myself with the belief that he did not for me, and that I had neglected him towards me. I know better now. He only professed me for a brief season, and that was to have I loved him once."

She ceased, and went out into the night, and roamed beneath the shadows of the trees, pondering in her own heart, and burdening her mind with many thoughts. Once, in spite of the malediction which had been called down on her friend that she held it might, in time, fall and crush her.

Two hours later Macon came out in search of her, for Hester had become alarmed by her protracted absence. He found her walking to and fro, with her hands clasped over her head, and he took her by the arm, and asked:

"Come in, Mrs. Blake, and take some rest. If you go on, this way, you will not be in a condition to do what will be required of you to-morrow. With Hester's assistance, I have removed Miss Landry to your bed, and Hester will take her place before Eunice wakes up, which will not be long, I think."

She unclasped her hands, and took the arm he offered her as she said:

"I am glad you came for me, for I have been walking here for hours, and I am tired. I have done a dreadful thing to-night, and I still I dropped down from fatigue, without thinking of what is developing upon me. I am but reminded me of the duties before me. I have done a dreadful thing to-night, and illusion of a life dispelled, Julian! I have cherished him as my own, and he was not. He rest—gone with the breath that destroyed it—and I will not give it a second thought. I will let him who took it from me. My life has been a succession of crimes, but I do not feel sorry to remedy that. I will at least give my daughter her own, and I will not feel that it is purchased at the expense of separating myself from her, and taking in her place the girl who is more than as dear to me."

"The separation will not be a long one," replied Macon soothingly, for he saw that she was both excited and exhausted. "Come in, and try to sleep for a few hours, by the time you rise you must be fresh and strong for what we have to do. Hester will be ready to go with us, and she is one of our allies."

"Yes, Hester will obey shall not do that. I have been living on a few years, and for the last since I have been walking here to-night; but I have learned that, and my will is stronger above them, and the phantoms that arise from the grave cannot force me to do what I am not as strong a will as woman ever had."

She ceased speaking, and they went on, and was flooding the broken pathway with light. Macon looked down upon her face, as the moon's returns. She shivered slightly as she said:

"It is past midnight, and I am cold. I am in the house with the dead, so I came out to meet you. Some hours have passed since I thought it best not to awaken her. Listen to the words. No wonder it is called a bird of ill omen. Hark! how it shrieks! It has given a thrill of dread and horror through me, and I would not hear it again for worlds. Let us go in."

Macon had perceived a large owl-tree that stood in the yard, and had heard the bird's notes echoed through the silent night, and were replied to by others not far away.

He felt a shudder pass through her frame as the place seems to be full of them. Go in and try to sleep, Hagar, and I will go to the forest all about your nocturnal serenade."

"No, I will not go in, and you will not, Blake and a wistful glance at her daughter, as she said:

"Good-night, my child. It seems to me as if this is the last hour in which I shall see you as I have been for years, and that I shall no longer Hester Blake, but Estelle Landry, and with the name I shall assume, there seems to be opening before me a few more years of life, and I am strongly inclined to accept the boon."

"Yes, we cannot part; but it shall not be for long, I promise you, mother. You must go in and lie down by Hester, and try to obtain some sleep, for your head is full of Estelle's gowns, and prepare to take upon myself the new name you have chosen. I shall bear myself right royally under my new name, and you will be proud of me."

There was a faint tone of exultation in her voice, and Mrs. Blake folded her in her arms, and whispered:

"I see that it gives you joy to claim this inheritance. Deeply as my daughter grieves about taking it with the necessary accompaniments of Julian Landry's unconsidered, even words. Hester. Such love as his is worth more than all the gold in the world, and you have cast by the free devotion of a human heart. I would have given you that love, and it was in no equivalent but your own will be more generous to this poor girl than you have been to me. She is a child of misery, and my loved was to me. Shall it not be so, dear?"

The girl wearily replied in the affirmative, and said:

"I will do the best I can. Good-night, mother."

Mrs. Blake kissed her again, and then went out into the dreary entry which divided the kitchen from a shed-room, and which was the only other apartment in the house. The door was half open, and a candle was placed on a shelf within. It was the dim, faint light of which she could see the interior.

Hester was sitting on a low chair, on which a mattress and sheets had been placed, and on which she had evidently been sleeping. She rose as she saw her daughter's place in the house, if not in the heart of the man who lay dead in the adjoining room. She shuddered slightly, and restrain the hatred that day by day she had believed was dying out in her heart, but she held herself forced to sustain the part she had undertaken.

There was no chair in the room, and she sat down on the edge of the bed, and took the hand on the bed between hers, to shut out the white face that lay there. She had not looked at it since the moment when she had turned away from her fallen in the opening years of her life, and had settled herself as if for a night of watching, and had done, and all she still meant to do, had been done, and all she still meant to do, had been done, and all she still meant to do, had been

OLD SCHOOL-MATES.

BY LOUISA S. COBBAN.

Guess who you are, said I to No, Mollie, not I.
Why, my dear, precious school-mate, the love as
young as
Before you sat once; number time not old age
Can rob your warm heart of life's best heritage.

But come, my dear friend, take my own easy-
chair.
It will do my eyes good to see you resting there.
We will love once again in life's reckoning spring.
And with care and solace to the wind we will
fling

But how strangely you look with that cap on
your head!
And your cross's like a garden that's been
sorely trod!
Why, what has become of that net-work of curls,
The name of the boys' hearts—the envy of girls?

And that sober gray cape hides a neck once so
fair,
But tell, I prefer these bewildering ties
Of rainbow-hued ribbon that clasp your pretty
eyes.

What possible use can you have for that hat
That sags at your side like a broken-down nag?
Why, it's the very reverse of all that is neat.
And that glasses and handkerchief are of fellow-
ribbon.

And where are the dimples that played hide and
seek
With the blush that would fly to and fro on your
cheek?

Ah! you've ceased branching out from both eyes,
to know
From Mother eyes, who never could wrinkle
sooner!

There's the same winning smile, and the same
love of fun
That exulted my every when we were both girls!
Our just hundred dollars' fortune was what it is
not.
But that you were always a little too wild!

What! up to your old, playful tricks again! I must
scold.
The same mischief was strutting 'round with a staff!
Thomas Gough, like a soldier with one wooden
leg!
Making light of misfortune! Heaven bless you for
that!

Forty years since we parted, two light-hearted
maidens!
And you used all these helps, as a General his
men!
And you didn't know me, but thought my sweet
Mag—
My daughter, named for you—your school-
friend to-day!

Dear me, how time flies! it seems but a day,
Since two merry young girls started out on life's
way!
Forty years with their highs and their shadows
have passed,
And the morning old verses on which we met now,
all!

We note it each other the changes time brings—
The vanishing youth, to which each fondly clings;
The wrinkles, the gray hairs, the stiffening joints,
And the weakness of all that we were growing old.

BETWEEN TWO FIRES.

By MRS. SOUTHWORTH,

AUTHOR OF "VIVIA'S SECRET," "SELF-MADE," "THE SOUTHERN," ETC.

CHAPTER CXXII.

ONE SINGLE WITNESS.

"The still true as it is strange:
Nay, the more true true, and therefore strange."
—SHAKESPEARE.

Every one arose and looked toward the prisoner, eager to catch the expected witness.

But the prisoner alone remained seated as the accused. He started up his head, first hearing the name of Craven Kyte, and then dropped back into his chair, pale as death.

Evidently he had not expected to hear this man called.

In the mean time a little bustle was heard in the bottom of the hall, as if some one pushing his way through the crowd.

Then appeared a tall, stout, pale, calm, handsome, and well-dressed old gentleman, who came forward and entered the witness box.

He swore to the customary pledge, and stood ready to give in his testimony.

In a few within range of them turned consternedly from the witness on the stand to the prisoner at the bar.

The two men were perfect duplicates of each other.

The oath was administered to the witness. Mr. Berners conducted the examination.

"Please to state your name and age, the place of your nativity, and all you know of the marriage performed at the house of Mr. ——, in the city of Philadelphia, on the fifteenth day of September last, between the hours of twelve and one P. M.," said the counsel.

"My name is Craven Kyte. I am a native of this town. I am twenty-three years of age. I know Miss Mary Grey one of the parties to this marriage. I was engaged to be married to her. On the evening of the fourteenth of September I arrived in Philadelphia, having followed her there at her request. On the morning of the fifteenth I got her by appointment a carriage and came to the house of Mr. ——. It was arranged that we should be married that day. I took a cab and we entered it. At her suggestion I directed the driver to take us to the rectory of the Rev. Mr. Borden. As we were going along, she proposed that we should marry her under the name of Alden Lytton."

At these words of the witness there was an immediate sensation in the court, breaking out in whispers and exclamations of surprise, which the judge, on striking on his desk, and said that order must be observed, or he should be obliged to command the clearing of the court room.

Order restored the proper effect, and the spectators became "as still as mice."

The examination of the witness was resumed.

"You say that Mrs. Mary Grey proposed that you should marry her in the name of Mr. Alden Lytton?

"Yes. I was very much astonished at the proposal, and expostulated with her about it, but she was so earnest, and urged her request in so absolute a condition of my ever getting her for my wife, I should regret her under the name of Alden Lytton.

"Which reason did she give for this singular request?

"She said she only wanted to play a harmless practical joke upon Miss Cavendish, the betrothed of Mr. Lytton."

"But her joke was no sleep and earnest that she made it the only condition upon which she would marry you at all, you say?"

"Yes."

"And did you comply with that condition?"

"Yes, sir. Sooner than lose her I complied with that wicked condition. It did seem very wicked at the time, for it only seemed foolish and purposeless. And besides, I firmly believe I was half crazy at that time."

"Quite likely," said Mr. Berners dryly; "proceed with your story."

"We left, sir, and, according to the directions of the bride, I directed the driver to the rectory. I got out and rang the bell. A servant opened it, and I gave him a card. He returned with a pencil which Mr. Borden wrote Lytton's name on it and told me to send that in to the rector as if it were my own. When I looked at the name on the card, I exclaimed, for I knew that Mr. Lytton was then on his bridal visit. And she said, so much the better.

"Again in those words a murmur of indignation ran through the crowded court room, but it was soon instantly suppressed, as the judge was wished to hear every word uttered by this witness.

He continued:

"I rang the bell at the rectory, and sent that card in by the servant who came to inquire the cause of my visit. I was invited into the rector's study. He addressed me as Mr. Lytton, and I bowed, but did not correct his mistake. Then I told him what I had come for. And he consented to perform the marriage ceremony, but said that he must do it in the church, which was just next door to the rectory. I went back to the carriage for Mary"—

"Meaning Mrs. Grey?"

"Yes. But I called her 'Mary' then. I did not want back for her, and brought her into the church, where, under the name of Alden Lytton, I was married to Mary Grey by the Rev. Mr. Borden, in the presence of Mrs. Martin, sexton of the parish, and of Sarah Martin, his daughter. A marriage certificate, signed by the minister and the witnesses, was then given to Mrs. Grey."

"What happened next?"

"At her request I left Grace her back to the Black House, where she had been stopping, and I went to the station to get my trunk, valise, and walked to the house, while I waited in a neighboring reading-room for her arrival. After an hour's absence she came and told me we drove to the 'Asterick,' where I had engaged rooms for us both. But she declined staying in town any time, and expressed a wish to go to Grace's house. So we only stopped at the 'Asterick' long enough to pay a visit to the parlor of the hotel, and then we took the train for Grace's, and drove in a carriage to Grace's house.

"Here the witness suddenly became so much agitated that he could not go on for some moments.

Mr. Denham brought him a glass of water. He drank, and seemed somewhat revived.

"Tell us what occurred at Hayes de Grace," said Mr. Berners at the "Star" had to-day, and after tea she proposed to take a walk with me in the garden. To this I objected, as daylight had then we had walked a while, she proposed that we should go into the house and be married. I refused, being but a modest swain. But she insisted, declaring that she had been brought up to walk in the dark and could row like a sprite and steer like a boat. I was for about an hour, and then I started the boat of her choice—a mere shell of a boat.

"Here the judge, who had been growing a little impatient, broke in with a few words of severe dictation.

"Pray, Mr. Berners, what has all this about the boat to do with the case on trial?"

"It has a great deal to do with it, your honor," said the counsel for the defense, who had a deep design upon the peace and honor of the gentleman whom she claimed as her husband, and that she did not hesitate at any means to accomplish her ends, the witness must respectfully replied the counsel."

"Let the witness proceed," said the the judge.

"What happened next?" inquired Mr. Berners.

"Murder happened next—at least an attempt at murder. We were in the middle of the lake, and I took the oars and rowed out into the stream, when suddenly the boat was knocked from more than two hours. It was a heavy blow, and I thought it was a shock of earthquake. But she shrieked, and looked around a certain point that I saw dimly down the lake. I rowed toward it, and when I came near it, when suddenly she made an exclamation that her hat had fallen into the water, and that I must go in to get it for her. It floated about a little way from the boat. I laid down my oars and stripped them, and was just leaned over the side of the boat and reached out my hand to get the hat, when she pushed further off. I had to lean as far over, and stretch my hand as far out, to reach it as much as ever I could do to keep my balance. And as I touched the hat, the boat, by a sudden and violent push from behind, and sent me overboard.

"I struck out for the boat, and succeeded in regaining it, and was just about to get in, when she pushed it from me, and I was obliged to swim after it. Twice, in my struggles for life, I was on the point of giving up in despair, but I saw her coming toward me, and I turned and found, from the impetus given it by the violence with which she had pushed me over. The second time I said I lost my senses. When I recovered them I found myself stretched out on the deck of a sailor, with several people around me. I was told that I was cast in all my limbs, and surely enough I found it so.

"Then, on my inquiry, I was told that I had rescued the bride.

"Yes, your Honor, I can shorten it, if they will permit me. The schooner that picked me up was bound for Cape May, and I was carried to Grace and other coal depots to Washington. Here I found that Mary Grey had been bound there as soon as safely give no account of myself, being ashamed to tell the story of the trick with the boat. I went to Philadelphia, where I lay ill in the free ward of the Samaritan Hospital, where I was not the good Sisters of Mercy, for two months. When I was well enough to leave the hospital I went to Grace, and found out that I had been registered there as Alden Lytton and Lady. I did not know how that happened, but I suppose somebody must have written the name in the book for me. Mrs. Lytton evidently supposed that I had made blotted with the river water, and had entered it Albert Lytton. So I let it stand for convenience."

"Confine yourself to facts, witness, and leave conjectures," said the judge.

"I beg your pardon, sir. I then was that my name was registered Albert Little, however it came about, and I was very glad of it, for the good Sisters right about my real name, so I let the matter go. As soon as I was able to write, and before I left the hospital, I wrote to my senior partner, Mr. Rastiendell, of the great banking-house of Rastiendell & Co., in this city, informing him of everything that had happened, especially as to Mary Grey's having on my marrying her under the name of Alden Lytton, and offering to resign my place in favor of one of my brothers. He was dreadfully shocked at the whole affair, and wrote me a letter to me with me, suggested that Mrs. Grey had somehow become insane, and advised me to keep quiet there, and give no clue to my whereabouts while until we should see what her purpose was, and feel her out. Some days after he wrote he proposed that I should take a commission from the navy department, and go out to Europe. As soon as I was able to travel I left the country on His business, and was absent several months, and only arrived in my native country a few days ago. I have not been to my lodging at New York. Having received some files of newspapers, I read the advertisements for me. I guessed at once that it was Mary Grey who had put them there. So I came on to Washington, and from there I came on here. I was told that the trial was going on; asked what was the matter, and was told about the case. Of course then I had the key to Mary Grey's mysterious crime, and I knew where I was wanted. I came at once to the court, wrote a note to the prisoner's counsel, and sent it by a junior counsel, who came out to meet me and brought me here."

That will do, Mr. Kyte. Gentlemen of the jury, you have heard the testimony of our witness, the only and all-sufficient witness for the defense; but we will recall one who appeared here as the most important witness for the prosecution. The Rev. Mr. Borden will please take the stand once more," said Mr. Berners.

The Rector of St. —— came forward and took his place in the witness box.

"Mr. Borden, will you be so good as to look at those two gentlemen and tell me, upon your oath, which of them you married to Mrs. Mary Grey?" politely requested Mr. Berners.

The witness looked from Alden Lytton to Craven Kyte, and then Craven Kyte back to Alden Lytton. And in his face and look, and tone, he said:

"May the Lord of Heaven forgive me, for I have made a sad mistake! It was that gentleman whom I married to Mrs. Grey." And he pointed straight at Craven Kyte.

A murmur of great excitement passed through the court room.

A while ago you swore it was the other one," said Mr. Berners, pointing to Alden Lytton. "And why? Has your memory begun to fail you?"

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And certainly every one who saw and compared the two men agreed with the last speaker.

"I have yet to be good, reverend sir, as to explain by what test you now know these two perfect duplicates, the one from the other, and are enabled to identify the gentleman with whom you married to Mrs. Grey on the fifteenth day of last September?"

"Certainly, sir. I can distinguish them by a slight peculiarity in the structure of the left ear. I once while I was then together, but which I have since observed. The lobe of the left ear of the gentleman who married Mrs. Grey is set on his head somewhat differently from that of the other—a mere shell of a boat.

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THE NEW YORK LEDGER

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ROBERT BONNER, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, JUNE 16, 1877.

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Corner of William and Spruce sts., New York.

What Does that Present of a Million Mean?

It is announced that the city of New Haven has offered to the State of Connecticut the sum of one million dollars, as a present, to be used in the construction of a new State House.

The object is to secure the removal of the State House in New Haven instead of any other locality in the State. It seems to be entirely a matter of business calculation, and New Haven has concluded that it will be a good bargain—a profitable investment—for her to pay one million dollars for the State House.

What does this mean?

If the mere assembling of a Legislature in a town were to bring to it no more money than the legal pay of the members, it would undoubtedly be sufficient to contribute essentially to the enriching of even a populous village. But legislation has, unfortunately for the people, become a matter of purchase and sale, and it is now well understood that whoever the capitol of a State is located money will flow in like a river, during the sessions of the Legislature. And money contributed for such purposes is lavishly spent, a large part of it in dissipation and extravagant and immoral indulgences. Hence the politicians who locate the State House located in a town becomes an object for pecuniary bids. It is of the nature of a license to set up a billiard saloon or a bar-room.

Look at Albany. Look at Trenton. Look at the city of Washington. The very atmosphere of those cities reeks with the corrupt expenditure of money in procuring or preventing legislation.

We must have a reform in these things in some way. It is essential to the preservation of our liberties. The first step toward it is to make its necessary generally felt and realized; and we think that the offer of a million dollars for the location of a State House in a particular town is a very opportune occasion for calling public attention to the subject.

Too Late.

There are few words that have a more melancholy sound than the simple phrase *Too late* in its application to many of the experiences of real life. A striking illustration of this is afforded by the circumstances attending the recent death, by drowning, of Mr. H. C. Bellevoy of this city. The father of Mr. HAMLEY, who resides at Albany, had been estranged from his son for a number of years, but, learning that the young man had retired from business and was about to visit Europe, he had sent him a letter, desiring a reconciliation, fearing that, as he was growing old and infirm, he might not live until his son's return.

The body of Mr. HAMLEY floated ashore at Castleton, on the Hudson, and on his person was found an envelope containing his father's letter to him. It is supposed that he had taken a night boat from New York, and was on his way to respond to the paternal invitation to a renewal of their friendship, when he fell overboard and was drowned.

The old gentleman was telegraphed to by the coroner, and was greatly overcome when he recognized the features of his son.

We remember a similar incident which occurred many years ago, and which impressed us deeply at the time. We happened to be brought in contact with a man who had lost a brother, from whom he had been for a short time estranged.

The brother was on board a steamboat which was burned, and he perished in the flames or in the water. The grief of the survivor was terrible, and we fully believed he never fully recovered from it.

Such occurrences preach a sermon to all. They are full of instruction. To-day is ours. To-morrow may not be. Avoid the harrowing reflection that you have postponed until it is "too late" that which ought to be done.

Anxious to be Hanged.

There is an old man, named JEREMIAH COLLINS, in prison at Albany, under sentence of death for the murder of his wife. Unlike most culprits similarly situated, he insists on the execution of his sentence. He insists upon it that his wife deserved to be killed, and at the same time he seems to think that he ought to be hanged. He desires to stay the consummation of his sentence, and expresses dissatisfaction with Gov. HOFFMAN for postponing his execution a few weeks. He was originally sentenced to be hanged on the 19th of May, but the Governor fixed upon the 15th of July. When he was sentenced he requested the Judge to make the time as short as possible.

Ice-Houses and Lightning.

Lightning seems to be particularly attracted by ice-houses. Nearly every summer several are burnt along the Hudson River, from being struck. One was destroyed in this way a few days ago, at Kingston, containing ten or twelve thousand tons of ice. We never heard of a powder-mill being struck—perhaps, however, they blow up often enough without.

DAMNATORY PRAYERS.

BY HENRY WARD BEECHER.

MR. BEECHER.—*Dear Sir:* A short time ago, I heard a minister in the pulpit pray that the unbelieving enemy to the congregation could swim like one, perhaps he didn't deserve much more than that. He had only jumped overboard, in a rough sea, and saved a young lady from drowning.

And a mean dog he would have been not to do it," carps some dry-land critic, who never ventured into water in his life, save in a bath-tub.

Certainly, valiant sir; but you would have pasted a dog on the head for doing it, wouldn't you? Instead of giving him a kick by way of reminder, he had done no more than his duty.

The merits of Paul's act might have been more generally acknowledged, had Kate Crombie been older and uglier. But when she emerged from the waves, supported in his arms, looking lovelier than mythical sea-heroines, the hearts of half a dozen young damsels, each of whom vowed he was on the point of falling in love with her, began to beat with envy, and to throb with spite.

Leaving them to burn, and Kate and Paul, for their present moist condition, to the mercy of their state-rooms, let us go back a little.

Kate Crombie was an orphan and an heiress, whose guardian, Sir Ross Buckie, had "willed her away" in her cradle to the infant son and heir of a sworn friend of his, who reciprocated the bequest by a similar disposition of his own property. The friend died, the guardian died, the friends died, leaving what they had done a just thing, as though it were not, and left the two children to settle for themselves, each of whom vowed he was on the point of falling in love with the other, as soon as they were old enough.

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Kate had never been beyond the limits of her native town, and Paul, who had been a wanderer from his childhood, was to her the very type

IN SUMMER TIME.

BY EMMA ALICE BROWNE.

The corn blades bursting their emerald sheaths,
Like the bowlèd spears of a monarch's shrine;
The orchards shake from their leaves' warm wreaths
The subtle essence of an airy wine;
The delicate fronds of the brake unfurl
And the passionate kiss of the glowing Noon;
And the harvests shine with a pallid gold
Where the shadow the whirring lyrics of dusk.

Over the broad green laterals
Like a silver-winged Victory writhes;
The emerald-coated grasshopper grips
And the meadow-lark flash with the ringing scythes.
Far away yet wake in the rear Morn
One pale cloud beads on her folded wing,
Like a diamond-tear of a sister's scorn
In the shower of the camp fire glinting.

Deep in the dingle the fire-fly sang
Their glimmering lamps and quit and brown;
The barberry bushes are bending down
Beneath their shadows and heavy dew;
All hints and sounds of the perfect day
Are sin to the minor key of eve.
From the drowsy tee on the drooping spray
To the mooing kine on her far-off pasture.

MARK HEBER'S LUCK;

OR,

Life on the Plains.

By LEON LEWIS,

AUTHOR OF "THE MASKED MARAUDER," "RED KNIFE," "THE BROKEN HOME," "EDDY'S SEARCH," "THE CHILD-POET OF DEAD MAN'S GULCH," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

BETWEEN HOPE AND FEAR.

The whisper of Mark Heber's voice, soft and low, and scarcely to be heard above the fluttering of the leaves of the oak-trees in the gentle shaded the group, fairly electrified the soul of the young girl captive.

She started slightly, spilling half the water in the heavy bucket she was holding and Garth's glance fell upon the young Indian lad who was her constant guard and attendant outside the lodge of Nomita.

The boy's wrapt gaze was still fixed upon the white girl, and the look of admiration in his black eyes unquestioned were exciting much dazzling. His boyish soul was too absorbed in the bright spectacle to be alive to minor sights and sounds, and the plaintive cry of the whippoorwill, and the quick, slender whisper had alike been unheard and unheeded by him.

Gay looked upward into the interlacing branches of the trees, and then into the darkness beyond the jagged mass of rocks behind the spring, her eager eyes trying to pierce the gloom, but she could trace no one outline of a human figure in either direction.

Mark Heber's voice had come to her, in breathless expectancy, the faint sound again thrilled through the air, bearing the words:

"I am behind the rocks, Sparkle, Gay, and assure me beyond a doubt that it is you."

Before he could reply even if such had been her intention, the Indian lad drew a step and stood toward her, extending to her a broken English:

"Pale-face water?"

"No, I did not speak," said Gay Heber, her senses all awake, her tones raised to a higher pitch than usual, her words being intended for Mark's ears. "I have been drinking, Hoo'ah'ah!"

"Pale face must go back to lodge of Devil Chief," said the boy, "Nomita want to see long already. Come."

He motioned her to precede him up the beaten path. Gay slowly obeyed, saying in the same clear, high pitch of voice she had before employed:

"I am coming, boy; but I'm afraid I shall have to carry the water myself."

There was no response from the shadows, save once again the low sound of the whippoorwill's cry.

Gay's heart thrilled with gladness. Mark was near. He heard her voice, and comprehended her words. He had come to rescue her.

She went lightly up the path toward the central lodges, the water spilling from the bucket as she walked, but the young Indian lad followed so well his self-appointed task that he noted not her face, and that the Indian lad was behind her. Gay's smile in her fear and rapture he might have suspected her secret.

She paused a moment outside the door of the Devil Chief's lodge to compose her face. Then with drooping eyes she entered the wigwam.

Nomita, Blue Jack's Indian wife, was slowly stirring her iron dish of hoeba over the fire. She looked around as Gay entered, and set her fourth, a small one, down on the ground. Gay Jack had ordered to be administered to Gay Heber that very night, and which was intended to destroy her life.

Nomita looked at the girl's entrance.

"Pale face gone long," she said harshly.

Gay made reply:

Nomita peeped into the tea dish, tipping it to her slightly to that the full flame of the fire might fall upon its contents. They were thick, black, and of a strong odor. The squaw was busily occupied with the hoeba.

"More water," said Nomita. "Bring water."

Gay took a gourd from a peg on the wall and filled it with water, which she carried to her task-mistress. Nomita poured some water her steeping herbs, and stirred the liquid with vigor.

"Nice tea," she said, with a soft blandness of manner and tone she had not before exhibited toward the young captive. "Much nice. Pale face drink. Good for her."

"It is for sick," replied Gay.

Nomita nodded assent.

"But I have no cold," declared Gay. "I am well enough. I don't want it."

"Pale face does want it," said Nomita, with a sudden darkening of her visage. "Pale face shall take. Nomita never lie. Nomita must take it! The Devil Chief has spoken. Wig-fare must obey."

There was that expressed in the face and tones of the Indian woman, pointing a terrible meaning. Yet dread purpose against the girl's life Gay Heber could not believe. Her back upright, with an instant conviction of her deadly peril.

That the Devil Chief meant to poison her she knew in that moment as well as if she had overheard what was uttered in confidence by his Indian wife only a few minutes before. Her heart grew faint and sick at the thought.

Yet she dared not, as much as by a twitching of a muscle, betray the agony of her consternation, reveal to Nomita the fact that she knew her purpose. She compressed her lips a little. A deadly pallor had crept up before her in the midst of her terror, but she knew she must face it as one not suspicious, and she must not betray.

By an exercise of self-control wonderful in one so young, she summoned up all her courage and presence of mind, and said petulantly:

"If I must take it, I suppose I must. But I have got no cup, and I am not going to drink anything to make my face dark like Nomita's."

Nomita spoke grimly, and continued to stir the potion with vigor.

"Pale face water," she muttered, peering into the dish. "Not strong enough. Spring have more cold. Pale face must let herself go."

Gay accepted the post, and proceeded to suit the dreadful exercise, which she feared might made her actually dizzy. Nomita withdrew from its concealment her bundle of herbs, and approached the hearth.

The squaw began to lift the dish from its bed of coals, but seized the young Indian woman, and by a determined turn of her hand, as well as strength, to make the affair seem the merest accident, the deadly mess was overturned on the hearth.

Nomita's eyes blazed with anger. She uttered angry words in the Dacotah tongue, and picked up a billet of wood and flung it at Gay, who dodged the missile and beat a hasty retreat.

Muttering in her own language, Nomita put a fresh supply of herbs in the dish, and called out gruffly:

"Bring water. Quick! Water!"

Gay sprang forward and caught up the bucket of water, hurrying toward the fire. At the third step her foot slipped, causing the accident, and she tripped and fell. The water went in a deluge over the fire.

The rage of Nomita was beyond the power of words to depict. It flashed up in a sudden fierce fire. She ran to the fallen girl and beside herself with fury kicked the prostrate form.

Gay plunged both hands into the soft, yielding earth, and pulled them violently.

"You shall go for more water," she cried breathlessly. "Nomita will have tea. The pale faced girl no trouble Nomita long. Get water!"

MARK HEBER DISCOVERS THE INDIANS IN PURSUIT.

Gay Heber gathered herself up from the floor, and picked up the empty bucket.

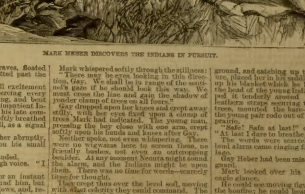
Nomita, seeing that the girl's wiles and called out shrilly to the Indian lad to accompany her to the spring. The boy obeyed, and Gay followed him. He had brusquely caught the water himself, but with the indulgence of the mess of his race, he found it much pleasanter and easier to act as guard to some one else who should perform the actual work. He was now at full play in the vicinity of the beauties among his tribe, and Gay Heber's beauty Nomita's piercing call and obeyed it sullenly, and with evident reluctance.

The Indian wife of the Devil Chief said a few words to the lad, and the captive Gay Heber to precede him down the path to the spring.

Gay complied with his mandate, carrying the rude bucket.

The night was full of shadows. As yet there were neither moon nor stars visible. In the darkness above could be traced by a keen eye, at a certain distance, and Gay wished in her soul for that moment only's blackness such as had favored the advance of the Indians upon the little settlement at the junction of the two forks.

In the lodge of the great chief Yahe, Blue Jack's father-in-law, the principal warriors of that branch of the Dacota nation, as the consolidated tribes of Sioux style themselves, sat around the fire-lit hearth in the centre of the wigwam, in grave council. The scent of their pipes, and the sound of Blue Jack's voice as



he addressed the assembled braves, floated out to the girl's ears as she filled past the lodge.

She hurried down the path, all captive-like and cagerness, her glances piercing every shadow. She reached the spring, and bent over it to fill her bucket. The impatient Indian lad, with his face toward its late companions, broke her hasten. Gay softly breathed again the notes of the whippoorwill, as a signal to Mark Heber.

The Indian boy turned upon her abruptly, and almost plainly marked on his small features.

"Pale face do that?" he demanded.

"Yes," said Gay, in a clear, high voice. "I like to."

The young lad regarded her for an instant with suspicion and downcast looks, as if to see nothing among the shadows, and, reassured by the momentary doubt, he said:

"Do it again. Wanko learn."

Gay Heber uttered the whippoorwill notes again and again. The boy trilled them after her with a perfect success.

"Wanko can call all the birds," he said proudly. "Wanko mocks the catfit, the dove, the loon, and the coyote. Wanko can do a great warrior."

There was a soft sound in the stillness, as of some one creeping stilly over the mass of rocks behind them. Gay's heart almost throbbed. The lad was too occupied with his self-assumed task to hear.

"Wanko can call the bird again," said the girl, in trembling tones. "I like to hear the captive like to hear him."

Wanko, pleased and flattered, trilled and whistled and sang in a perfect medley of bird-like notes.

And behind him, as Gay saw, a deeper shadow was slowly creeping up, moving almost silently, with a pall-like gloom hanging around the form.

It seemed to Gay that her heart accepted into her throat. She stood almost paralyzed with terror and expectation.

The shadow came on, and paused within the position of her head, which was stretched forward, as she peered beyond the lad as he appeared to surprise the young performer. He stopped abruptly, with his mouth open in astonishment.

And then, before he could speak, or even turn his head, the figure that had crept up behind him in the darkness, with a powerful right and a heavy blanket was thrown over the head of the young Indian lad.

He could not speak or scream. The sudden rush smothered, for he was caught up by a single strong arm and borne away, while a broad breast against which he was held in an iron grasp.

Gay Heber dropped the bucket into the spring and bounded after.

"Oh, Mark! Mark!" she gasped. "It is really you!"

The figure advanced a step nearer to the girl, and Mark Heber's voice replied in the low tones it had used before:

"Yes, it was Mark Heber! In the dimness, his keenly face smiled upon her. Gay's heart pleasured at her, and she could trace his every feature.

She could have flung herself upon his breast, but they had no time now for such emotions.

"My darling!" breathed Mark tremulously. "Thank God, I have found you! I knew that I would not come out again to-night. But God led me to you. We have a fight on hand, for my horse is waiting outside the village, a mile away, and I have left him there. Come, the horror of the Indian lad will be discovered, and near the wood. Follow me—softly, Gay. There are Indian guards posted on the path."

"But what will you do with the boy, Mark?" asked Gay, in a low voice, for she knew that dare not leave him to raise an alarm, and I cannot kill him."

"No may impede our flight. Can you not bind his hand and foot, Mark, and leave him somewhere near this spot?"

"I will do so," he said, "but now you may be discovered. I will lead you out of the village as I entered it. Come."

He turned and motioned Gay to precede him.

Gay fitted after him, keeping close behind him.

There was a narrow foot-path that led from the village past the spring to the river at a little distance. Mark Heber began his way, moving as silently as possible, and Gay crept after him.

They passed three wigwams which, fortunately, were dark and silent, and then, reaching the last one, Mark halted and crouched low on the ground. Gay did the same. Both heard distinctly the unquestionable tread of the Indian sentinel.

They crouched still lower as the guard cautiously and slowly passed them. A friendly cloud had screened them. The young lad in Mark Heber's arms struggled a little, but the blanket was held down by the quadruple fold of the blanket into the body of the very mouth, and he became motionless as if dead.

The guard passed beyond the bearing of the young couple, and disappeared behind an intervening group of huts.

Mark whispered softly through the stillness:

"Once may be even looking in this direction. Gay, I shall be ready for the watch at the gate, if we should look this way. We must get close to the ground, and keep in the shadow. She reached the spring, and bent over it to fill her bucket. The impatient Indian lad, with his face toward his late companions, broke her hasten. Gay softly breathed again the notes of the whippoorwill, as a signal to Mark Heber.

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ed. If I had noticed it would send you to school another three years, and give you the benefit of another summer's court sate. You would not have missed it, I must do my best to make it up to you, for," he said to himself, with a long breath.

"Every body don't consider me a child," said Gay, in a tone that seemed considerably aggrieved. Again growing very tall, and I don't consider a girl who can furnish a house out of a store of cloth and a few boards and nails, who can cook and wash and iron and sew and manage, who can make every cent go with strategy, and who don't call such a girl a mere child." Why, I've been through the Higher Arithmetic, the big Grammar and Geography, and I've studied Astronomy and drawing, and I know the Rule of Three just as well as I know a breastwork. I'd like to go to school, Mark, but I'm no baby."

"Well Winnie don't think you are," said Mark gloomily.

"Winnie he don't. And that reminds me—but you haven't seen Will to talk with him since I was captured, so he can't have heard me say question, Mark?"

Mark looked over his shoulder, and inquired "What question did he want to ask me? Oh, Gay, he talked here to you, and asked you to marry him? And he would go and tell your friend Mark, in a raised voice. "Is that it?"

"Yes, it is."

"Well, you're plain, and you're poor, don't you, sir, Mark?" said Gay brightly. "I'm too young, you know. And that's what I told him."

Mark expressed a grunt.

"But you love him, Gay?" he said anxiously.

"No, I don't," said Gay decidedly. "I love you and Will Whitmore, Mark, until you make Hal Amory. He's handsome, I'm believed, Mark, dear," she added, "that we are to be cousins, and I'm fond of him as a cousin, but coming back for work in water. It's been a long time I have had a bit of wicked-ness tonight."

They rode on, talking, explaining, and chatting merrily, but under all the lightness lay a secret dread and terror to which neither of them knew how to speak or even to think or confess. Each sought to cheer the other, and Gay rattled on with a forced and unnatural mirth, and Mark kept a keen look-out for pursuers.

The hours passed, and the clouds lifted from the sky, the breeze died, the new moon and the stars came out one by one, the night dew fell, dim and faint, yet oddly luminous, pervaded earth and sky.

And still nothing was seen of the pursuing savages.

The night wore on, and the morning dawned. The fugitives came to a halt about sunrise in a wooded region upon the bank of a small stream, and, tethering their horses to a tree, dismounted, and prepared to rest.

Mark spread out some of the cooked meat from his saddle-bags and divided it with Gay. It was the pleasantest and sweetest meal either had ever eaten. The water of the cool clear stream served as their beverage, and they had the cool shade of the trees upon the edge of the forest to shelter them from the sun.

When the meal was over, Mark said:

"You are tired out, Gay, and must rest. You must lie down and sleep. I will make a bed here in your blanket, while I watch over you. This afternoon you may watch while I sleep. We shall have to divide the watch between us."

"I am glad to lie down," said Gay, finding a shady knoll among the tall grass, and spreading her blanket there. "But you are tired too, Mark. I'll be awake by afternoon."

She covered herself in the folds of her blanket and went to sleep.

Mark roused to aid the lonely vigilant. When Gay awoke, refreshed and strong, her Mark was seated beneath her and shook her, crying softly:

"Wakey, Gay! The Indians, full fifty of them, are coming! Blue Jack is at their head. They are mad, those noble chiefs, and are making directly for us! Great Heaven! Can they have seen us? Or have they tracked us? Gay Heber leaped to her feet with a cry of consternation.

There, in the westward, she saw a body of Indian warriors, mounted on their ponies, in hot pursuit visible, and among them appeared in that clear atmosphere as savages. They were making straight for the point at which the fugitives were resting.

Had they seen the fugitives? Had they tracked them to this safe resting, where the young pair had believed themselves safe?

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

NED'S RING.

BY MATHILDE RAYFAN.

"Well, Ned, is that ready to go, and rest your head? I am glad to see you. When did you return to the city?" said Nellie Rayner to the young man of about twenty-three years of age, to Edward North, as entering the room, she sank, said Doctor day, on Fourth Avenue, New York.

"Yes, 'tis really; but I assure you I am not my ghost, bringing you tidings that I had safely arrived at the other side of Jordan, and all that sort of thing," replied Ned, a fine tall at this moment a very pale-looking, looking youth, while he warmly shook hands with his friend.

What's the matter with you, and whence have you returned, that you look so pale, thin, and ill, and altogether unlike the handsome Edward's face with no merry blue eyes, and curly brown hair?" Nellie to" and added, "you are a very grave sir—why, you are not married, young man? You see Ned's bowing, because the latter blushed and bewildered countenance which Cousin Will and Sam Dandelion failed to see. "Then you to experience that Hymen's fetters are not to be compared to those of love, for you, I can tell, was that's a happy sign. You are not married, Ned, are you?"

"No, indeed," said Ned, as the two grown-ended toward Broadway, "I am going directly the opposite road. I will accompany you, Nellie, and all that sort of thing."

"Of course I shall," said Nellie, her becoming now really serious. "You broke with Miss Ogden, I suppose, because you returned to her ring, and, well, that accounts satisfactorily for your pale face and sober brow. But come, let us go to some restaurant, and then tell me whether it is really a reconciliation or only a passing affair of sentiment?"

When I tell you that I took the ring which I gave her and threw it into the river, and then I trampled upon it until it was crushed, though the ring had cost me several hundred dollars, you will comprehend that the reasons which induced me to do so were of a very serious nature," said Ned.

"Surely they must have been of an awfully grave nature," said Nellie, a gleam of pleasure with amusement. "An eccentric, foolish Edward North, to be seen in public parts into the street when he quarrels with his sweetheart, but then a man, particularly a man, is so far the value of a present he made as to throw it away, and then to wreak his wrath on the inanimate gold of beauty."

"And so I did," said Ned, when they were comfortably housing in Roberts's room. "I do not like to talk about it, Nellie, but as you and how and why I determined on her ring for her own selfish ends, and all that sort of thing. Saturday I was to accompany her to the opera in the evening. When I arrived there she was dissatisfied with my dress coat and vest, and she was not, and she was afraid to leave her little brother Tom alone with the servant. Well, I proposed to stay with the spoiled brat, that she might go to church, and she refused to go without me. I had a dreadful time of it. The boy accustomed to be coaxed to go to sleep, began to scream as if a knife had been at his throat, and all that sort of thing, when I, as soon as Nellie was out of hearing, had him on the lounge, where he generally takes his first nap. Well, I had to sing to him, and he would not take the slightest notice of his kicks and screams, and did not even wipe his nose, and all that sort of thing, but placing myself comfortably in an easy chair, began to read. I had read—well, I don't know exactly how long, I did not look at my watch, but it was from an hour or so, when somebody touched my arm. I looked up, and the little fellow stood beside me, his face in a frightful condition. As he presented it to me I could not help him, took him on my lap, told him stories, gave him a large bag of candy, and, well, all that sort of thing, and thus proved that by judicious treatment and good nervous nature can be controlled. Well, while we were thus comfortably occupied, Nellie came in with the gratified air, and, looking over my head with anger, I showed him a picture of Nellie, and in my pocket-book, asked me who it was.

"Nellie," he said, laughing; and jumping from my lap, he went to the table and brought me an album. Turning to a picture of a very handsome man which until now I had never seen among her relations, he said, "Nellie's papa."

"I felt as if the trumpet of Jericho were blown in my ears.

"Who is it?" I asked the precious urchin, after recovering somewhat from the stunning effect, and all that sort of thing.

"Nellie's papa!" Nellie's boy repeated he, dancing through the room.

"He told me, Ned, and closed, catching him, and I am not sure that I did not give him an indignant shake, and he began to cry.

"Promising him a drum, a horn, a fiddle, candy, anything he liked, I succeeded in getting at length out of the room, and told me Nellie had said so. I asked him the gentleman's name, but he did not know. I believe I mentioned every name in Christendom, and all that sort of thing, but until I said:

"Is his name not John Ogden?"

"His name is John."

"He told me, then, that he came every evening.

"Does he tell Nellie that she is pretty? I asked.

"Yes, yes, he tells Nellie that she is pretty," said the boy, nodding his head.

"Does he kiss her?" questioned I further, thinking for the time that I must have willingly the house down, when he sang out:

"Yes, he kiss Nellie, and Nellie kiss Nellie?"

But, Ned, how in the name of common-sense did you answer all your questions to the child?" said Nellie, her face flushing, and her eyes flashing with anger.

"Now please don't interrupt me. Let me finish my story," said Ned, "and then you can your saying. As for my believing that young John Ogden was the child's papa, I knew it. It not said that out of the mouths of babes and sucklings wisdom is at last about you. Well, after this interesting disclosure, I felt that I must have a talk with Nellie on the subject. I might have acted when Nellie returned, but I thought it best to wait until I had myself under control, and all that sort of thing.

"What's the matter, Ned?" she said.

"Oh!" cried he, clapping his hands in great glee, "I will tell you something, Nellie, grandma, and ever so many on their noses. You are already drowned; so is grandma, and I am going to be drowned, and so will be the cat and the dog."

"Turning around, I saw with horror that the child had opened the window, and climbed the album in the basin in which I had washed his face.

"Being just about to prevent him from trying to drown himself, a servant entered through the door opened, and Nellie entered.

"Why, Ned, what's the matter? I am so sorry. I did not allow her to proceed, but taking the child by the hand, I left the room, and, having dashed it on the floor, stepped upon it, and without a word, I left the house."

"Why, Ned, you're not uncommonly foolish," said Robert. "How can a man out of an incident act so? Or how can they tracked as Gay Heber leaped to her feet with a cry of consternation.

"There, in the westward, she saw a body of Indian warriors, mounted on their ponies, in hot pursuit visible, and among them appeared in that clear atmosphere as savages. They were making straight for the point at which the fugitives were resting.

Had they seen the fugitives? Had they tracked them to this safe resting, where the young pair had believed themselves safe?

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

NED'S RING.

BY MATHILDE RAYFAN.

"Well, Ned, is that ready to go, and rest your head? I am glad to see you. When did you return to the city?" said Nellie Rayner to the young man of about twenty-three years of age, to Edward North, as entering the room, she sank, said Doctor day, on Fourth Avenue, New York.

"Yes, 'tis really; but I assure you I am not my ghost, bringing you tidings that I had safely arrived at the other side of Jordan, and all that sort of thing," replied Ned, a fine tall at this moment a very pale-looking youth, while he warmly shook hands with his friend.

What's the matter with you, and whence have you returned, that you look so pale, thin, and ill, and altogether unlike the handsome Edward's face with no merry blue eyes, and curly brown hair?" Nellie to" and added, "you are a very grave sir—why, you are not married, young man? You see Ned's bowing, because the latter blushed and bewildered countenance which Cousin Will and Sam Dandelion failed to see. "Then you to experience that Hymen's fetters are not to be compared to those of love, for you, I can tell, was that's a happy sign. You are not married, Ned, are you?"

"No, indeed," said Ned, as the two grown-ended toward Broadway, "I am going directly the opposite road. I will accompany you, Nellie, and all that sort of thing."

"Of course I shall," said Nellie, her becoming now really serious. "You broke with Miss Ogden, I suppose, because you returned to her ring, and, well, that accounts satisfactorily for your pale face and sober brow. But come, let us go to some restaurant, and then tell me whether it is really a reconciliation or only a passing affair of sentiment?"

When I tell you that I took the ring which I gave her and threw it into the river, and then I trampled upon it until it was crushed, though the ring had cost me several hundred dollars, you will comprehend that the reasons which induced me to do so were of a very serious nature," said Ned.

"Surely they must have been of an awfully grave nature," said Nellie, a gleam of pleasure with amusement. "An eccentric, foolish Edward North, to be seen in public parts into the street when he quarrels with his sweetheart, but then a man, particularly a man, is so far the value of a present he made as to throw it away, and then to wreak his wrath on the inanimate gold of beauty."

"And so I did," said Ned, when they were comfortably housing in Roberts's room. "I do not like to talk about it, Nellie, but as you and how and why I determined on her ring for her own selfish ends, and all that sort of thing. Saturday I was to accompany her to the opera in the evening. When I arrived there she was dissatisfied with my dress coat and vest, and she was not, and she was afraid to leave her little brother Tom alone with the servant. Well, I proposed to stay with the spoiled brat, that she might go to church, and she refused to go without me. I had a dreadful time of it. The boy accustomed to be coaxed to go to sleep, began to scream as if a knife had been at his throat, and all that sort of thing, when I, as soon as Nellie was out of hearing, had him on the lounge, where he generally takes his first nap. Well, I had to sing to him, and he would not take the slightest notice of his kicks and screams, and did not even wipe his nose, and all that sort of thing, but placing myself comfortably in an easy chair, began to read. I had read—well, I don't know exactly how long, I did not look at my watch, but it was from an hour or so, when somebody touched my arm. I looked up, and the little fellow stood beside me, his face in a frightful condition. As he presented it to me I could not help him, took him on my lap, told him stories, gave him a large bag of candy, and, well, all that sort of thing, and thus proved that by judicious treatment and good nervous nature can be controlled. Well, while we were thus comfortably occupied, Nellie came in with the gratified air, and, looking over my head with anger, I showed him a picture of Nellie, and in my pocket-book, asked me who it was.

"Nellie," he said, laughing; and jumping from my lap, he went to the table and brought me an album. Turning to a picture of a very handsome man which until now I had never seen among her relations, he said, "Nellie's papa."

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"Who is it?" I asked the precious urchin, after recovering somewhat from the stunning effect, and all that sort of thing.

"Nellie's papa!" Nellie's boy repeated he, dancing through the room.

"He told me, Ned, that he came every evening.

"Does he tell Nellie that she is pretty? I asked.

"Yes, yes, he tells Nellie that she is pretty," said the boy, nodding his head.

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But, Ned, how in the name of common-sense did you answer all your questions to the child?" said Nellie, her face flushing, and her eyes flashing with anger.

"Now please don't interrupt me. Let me finish my story," said Ned, "and then you can your saying. As for my believing that young John Ogden was the child's papa, I knew it. It not said that out of the mouths of babes and sucklings wisdom is at last about you. Well, after this interesting disclosure, I felt that I must have a talk with Nellie on the subject. I might have acted when Nellie returned, but I thought it best to wait until I had myself under control, and all that sort of thing.

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"Turning around, I saw with horror that the child had opened the window, and climbed the album in the basin in which I had washed his face.

"Being just about to prevent him from trying to drown himself, a servant entered through the door opened, and Nellie entered.

"Why, Ned, what's the matter? I am so sorry. I did not allow her to proceed, but taking the child by the hand, I left the room, and, having dashed it on the floor, stepped upon it, and without a word, I left the house."

"Why, Ned, you're not uncommonly foolish," said Robert. "How can a man out of an incident act so? Or how can they tracked as Nellie, their come and pat you in a straight-forward way, and explain matters? Why, this is the very thing, Ned."

"I must say that beats everything I ever heard of. I should fall into the antiquated category of the Arabian Nights, Robert," he sighed, but I am quite sure that I would not remain there long. Fancy me going to her and even set things right again, when you hear—I myself! I myself! I myself! I myself!"

"Do not mention it," said Ned, becoming very uneasy. "I myself! I myself! I myself! to exist a child could imagine all that?"

"All right! Then he followed you and came, and called it Nellie's beau. The picture might be that of her father, and the child, in the absence of you, like most lovers, ever ready to torment you, had made the most of it. Well, I'll be hanged if I would have thought of the idea, and ask the young one questions, when she, like a true woman, knowing that you do not come near me for consolation, if you don't come to me."

"For goodness' sake be quiet, or you will bring Nellie here, and she will be in a fit of hysterics. Well, the other coming and going, as he rapidly ran down the stairs, I saw a picture of Prince Alexis. Oh, Nellie, you were always ingenious to deceive me, and in spite of all sorts of troubles, do lend me a helping hand to get out of this scrape. Well, I was confounded fool I was, to—"

"Yes you are right as to the right place is in Mr. Seymore's keeping," Pat said gloomily.

"Well, Sir, I'll be off," Sambo hurried up to the door, counting coin from his high forehead, and saying:

"Good-night, Sambo, I'll be after guessing all right," and so left us.

"Well, Seymore, I'll be off, as she cannot see how handsome Pat is?" said Mrs. Truitt; "and I'll be perfectly happy to see Nellie and the little girl, and will make a good farmer's wife. So I'll be off, and you can remain here and be a good boy."

"Yes, I will with my cousin. Pretty, because Mrs. Truitt would certainly become a fashion to fashionable circles. Yet it seemed as if Nellie and Seymore were not pleased at such an arrangement. Every day his attentions became more marked, and Nellie, with all her airs and her heart-rending, honor-offending, disgraceful ways, was the belle of the village, and the favorite of the gentry. Seymore was the favorite of the gentry. During this time I will leave Nellie and Seymore to their fate, and pick you are, but also that your fever was undoubtedly caused by the sweetness of the air is sufficient to explain to her, and at the same time encourage confidence that I have been sent—they should come to see you, above all things to be careful of your health. Now, as the person does in the best of a raving fever, he is not to be trusted with himself."

"Of course she will forgive you. Nothing is so easily as a man, practical of heaven. If you have had a slight quarrel with a girl; and you have not committed murder, you are sure to make up, without wishing to ask pardon on your knees," said Mr. Whitmore, who entered leave-taking, and you will see how Nellie will receive you with open arms."

Robert went to the door, and as he opened found the whole house in commotion. Nellie had suddenly fallen ill, and as they spoke of a day long, and refused to see a physician, her mother and her sister Julia came to stay with her.

"I am sorry that I have to aggravate the trouble you all seem to be in by bringing you bad news," said Robert, "but Nellie is ill."

"Yeah, look for Heaven's sake speak low! Nellie is in the other room, and the walls are so thin she can hear every word," said Mrs. Lane. "What is the matter with Edward?"

"I found him this morning wandering through the streets in such a condition that he was almost out of his head. How long all he had been in that deplorable state I cannot say, but I found him in the street, and took him yesterday. He is now in my room, and is considerably cooled down, but of course me to go and see Miss Nellie, and tell her that he is very sorry to be unable to accompany her to the opera, and that he will call to-morrow, as he is not well enough to go out. Nellie, as he presented it to me, I could not help him, took him on my lap, told him stories, gave him a large bag of candy, and, well, all that sort of thing, and thus proved that by judicious treatment and good nervous nature can be controlled. Well, while we were thus comfortably occupied, Nellie came in with the gratified air, and, looking over my head with anger, I showed him a picture of Nellie, and in my pocket-book, asked me who it was.

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OH, HAPPY ARE WE—SO FREE, SO FREE!

BY CALEB DUNN.

Down by the river the willow stands,
Weeping, yet smiling in the sun,
While the south wind's warm and odorous hands
Through the leaves their fingers run.
Up in the branches the oriole sings,
Like the proudest and noblest of feathered kings,
While his mate aloft on a lithe limb swings,
And sweetly says,
"Oh, happy are we—
So free, so free!"

Under that tree by the river side,
Many, aye, many a year ago,
I sat with my loved and loving bride,
And watched the water flow
Onward toward the distant main,
As our lives, which were then unknown to pain,
Flowed on to the future we hoped to gain,
When we might sing,
"Oh, happy are we—
So free, so free!"

An age with its history has come and gone
Since together we watched the tide,
And sorrow has touched with a sombre tone
My heart and the heart of my bride;
We have reached the future we longed to know,
We have pleasures found and learned of woe;
But now, when the evening breeze breathes low,
We fondly sing,
"Oh, happy are we—
So free, so free!"

The twilight paints with a purple hue
The hills where the parting kiss
Of the sun, in a golden and scarlet adieu,
Melts in a dream of bliss;
We watch the sky as its lamps awake,
And while the heavens, like a luminous lake,
In waves of glory over us break,
We gladly sing,
"Oh, happy are we—
So free, so free!"

Free from the ills which often assail,
Free from the shafts of care,
Free from misfortune's terrible gale,
Free from the work of despair;
Free from the evil of wrong and sin,
Free to do good and its work to begin,
Free to love God and His blessing to win;
Free ever to sing,
"Oh, happy are we—
So free, so free!"

A DARING GAME;

OR,

Neva's Three Lovers.

By MRS. HARRIET LEWIS,

AUTHOR OF "THE HAMPTON MYSTERY," "THE BAILIFF'S SCHEME," "THE LADY OF KILDARE," "THE OLD LIFE'S SHADOWS," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XLVII.

THE FINAL MOVE IMPENDING.

The young Lord Towyn came into his sitting-room and the presence of his friends like a sunny south breeze, all hopefulness and gladness. He found Sir Harold walking the floor, his head bowed upon his breast, his face ghastly pale, his eyes haggard, his mind bordering upon distraction. The father's anxieties concerning his missing daughter were almost more than the overstrung brain and tortured heart could bear.

Mr. Atkins stood at the window, sullenly despairing.

Ryan, completely at his wit's end, sat before the blazing fire in a crouching attitude, and with crestfallen visage.

Sir Harold, Atkins and Ryan turned, as by one impulse, toward the young Earl, as he bounded lightly into the room. Their eyes expressed their wonder at the change a few hours had wrought in him.

"You look like incarnate sunshine, Arthur," said the Baronet sadly. "Ah, the elastic spirit of youth!"

The young lord laughed joyously, his fair face aglow with the gladness that filled his being. He took off his greatcoat and hat, great drops of sleet or rain falling from it, and shook himself, as he said:

"There's a mist beginning to fall. We shall have a wet day to-morrow."

Sir Harold looked more keenly at the young Earl, and a sudden excitement possessed him.

"What has happened, Arthur?" he demanded. "You have news of Neva?"

The glad smiles rippled like waves of sunlight over the young lord's mouth, and a joyous light danced in his blue eyes.

"Yes," he said, "I have news of Neva."

In an instant, Sir Harold, Atkins and Ryan crowded around our hero, all eagerness and excitement.

"Is she here, at Inverness?" cried Atkins. "Have you seen her?"

"No; she is hidden among the Highlands, up in Ross and Cromarty. She is safe and well."

"But how do you know it?" demanded Ryan, full of professional zeal and jealousy at once.

Lord Towyn took in his own the right hand of Sir Harold and pressed it, as he answered gravely:

"I have seen Craven Black!"

A series of exclamations burst from the Earl's hearers. Sir Harold Wynde trembled like a leaf, and turned his back upon the keen-eyed detective.

"Black is here?" ejaculated Ryan, all thoughts of "the mysterious Mr. Hunlow" lost in his sudden amazement. "Then our trip to Scotland was not a wild-goose chase, after all! Tell me where he is, my lord;" and Ryan took a step toward the door.

"Leave the management of the affair to me for the present, Ryan," said Lord Towyn. "You have placed us on the right track, and you shall have all the credit for doing so, but we want no arrests, no noise, no scandal. The matter must be hushed up for family reasons. No whisper must go forth to the world of the wickedness of Lady Wynde. The failure of the conspirators must be their punishment."

"Yes, yes," said Sir Harold. "The Earl is right. There must be no scandal."

The detective shot a keen glance at the Baronet, whose back was still toward him.

"I have discovered," continued Lord Towyn, "that Craven Black has an old house up in the Highlands, and that he has Neva there in close imprisonment. Neva has all the courage for which we gave her credit, and holds out stoutly against her enemies. Black apprehends a long stay in the Highlands while reducing her to subjection, and has come to Inverness to-day for winter stores. His yacht lies in the river, and he will be off at daybreak."

"What are we to do?" exclaimed Atkins. "He will escape us. It will be necessary to arrest him."

"I have made all the preparations for pursuit," replied our hero. "I have a sloop, provisioned and ready, in which we will follow the yacht. We will dine here, and at a late hour this evening we will go aboard our vessel. We must be off in the morning, soon after the yacht."

Sir Harold plied the Earl with questions, and the latter told the tale of his day's adventures at full length.

At six o'clock, dinner was served in their sitting-room. After dinner they talked for hours, and at ten o'clock that evening they quitted their hotel and went down to the wharf.

A fine mist was falling. The river was shrouded in darkness, but watery gleams of light came from the yacht and the other vessels lying in the river. The wind was still strong and free, blowing in fitful gusts.

The party had hardly come to a halt upon the wharf, when a small boat manned by two rowers shot out of the gloom, and ran alongside the landing-place.

"Is it you, Macdonald?" asked the young Earl, bending forward and straining his eyes through the darkness.

"Aye, aye, sir. Is it you, my lord?" said Macdonald, in a loud whisper, rising in the boat.

"You are on time," said Lord Towyn. "The clock is striking the hour at this moment."

The Earl assisted Sir Harold into the boat, and sprang in after him. Atkins and Ryan followed, and the boat shot out again into the stream. A vigorous row of several minutes on the part of the brothers Macdonald, brought the party alongside *The Lucky*, and they climbed to her deck. The boat was drawn up and secured to the davits.

The young Earl led the way out of the wet and gloom down into the cabin. There was no fire here, but a lantern hung from the ceiling, shedding a bright light upon the table and the bench around it. The air was chilly, and the small cabin, despite its snugness, had the comfortless appearance usual to a ship's cabin.

"It's cold here," said the elder Macdonald, the captain of the sloop. "I'll just mix you a punch. There's nothing like a good punch to keep the rheumatiz out of one's bones."

He brought from the pantry a spirit lamp, which he lighted. Over this, upon a light frame-work, he placed a tea-kettle. Then he brought out an immense bowl and ladle, a netted bag full of lemons, a tin can of sugar, various spices, and a jug of Scotch whisky. When the water in the tea-kettle boiled, he rolled up his sleeves and set to work, concocting a punch which proved a success. The four passengers, as well as the two Macdonalds, did full justice to the warming beverage.

About eleven o'clock Sir Harold Wynde was persuaded to retire to a state-room and berth, but he did not sleep. A host of anxieties pressed upon him, and he tossed for hours on his hard bed, the prey of a torturing anguish.

Atkins and Ryan went to bed, and to sleep.

Lord Towyn went out upon the deck, and walked to and fro with Macdonald, whom he found to be a shrewd, kindly Scotsman, and he told him enough concerning the misdeeds of Craven Black, and the abduction of Miss Wynde, to interest him personally in the restoration of Neva to her friends.

"We must keep an eye upon the yacht all night," said the Earl. "She may creep out in the darkness, and if she attempts that, we will creep after. I know the route she will take, but I prefer to arrive at the inland loch not an hour behind her."

"I will keep watch," said Macdonald. "You ought to get a little sleep, my lord."

"I cannot sleep," answered Lord Towyn, more to himself than to his new ally. "My veins seem full of quicksilver to-night, rather than full of blood. So near to her—so near!"

He paced the deck alone in the mist and the darkness. Around him the watery gleams of light flickered upon the river, and from the wharves other watery gleams strayed, looking like reflections of the first. The bells rang the hours with muffled clangor. A strange ghostliness fell upon the dark river and the sleeping city.

All through the night Lord Towyn continued his weary tramping to and fro upon the deck. One of the Macdonalds shared his vigil; the other slept.

The Arrow lay quietly at her moorings throughout the night, but at daybreak signs of activity were seen upon her deck. The morning had not fairly dawned when the yacht slipped out of the stream, heading toward Moray Frith.

The breeze was favorable to her progress, without being astern, and she bowled away at a fine rate of speed. The young Earl, looking through a sea glass, could distinguish four figures upon the deck of *The Arrow*, and one of these he recognized as that of Craven Black.

"Shall we shake out the sails, my lord?" asked the elder Macdonald. "The yacht goes well, but I fancy we might show her the heels of *The Lucky* in a fair race. We can keep her in sight the whole distance."

"That won't do, Macdonald. Black must not suspect he's followed. This mist is like a vail, and will conceal us if we keep at a reasonable distance behind. Let him get half way to Fort George, and then we will start."

In good time, when *The Arrow* had made about the distance indicated as desirable, *The Lucky* slipped from her moorings, and shaking out her sails as a bird shakes its wings, she flew onward over the waters in pursuit.

The sloop was half-way to the fort, and the yacht was out of sight, when the Baronet, fully dressed, and showing by his haggard face that he had not slept during the night, came out upon the deck.

The young Earl took Sir Harold's arm and they walked the deck together, conversing in low tones.

A little later, Mr. Atkins and Ryan appeared, and the four passengers adjourned to the cabin, where the younger Macdonald, who acted as steward, had set out upon the cabin table a formidable array of cold meats, bread, biscuits, and fruits, both fresh and preserved. A pot of hot coffee had also been provided, and a bowl of hot punch was ready for those who preferred it.

After breakfast, the passengers returned to the deck.

They passed Fort George in good time, and came out into the rougher waters of the Moray Frith. Here their progress was less rapid. *The Lucky* lurched somewhat; but when she turned into the straits, and finally emerged into the smoother waters of Cromarty Frith, she was moving as steadily, although by no means as swiftly, as a bird upon the wing.

The Arrow was out of sight, and Macdonald crowded on all the sail the small sloop would bear. It was well he did so, for as the day wore on the wind grew shifty, and sometimes blew dead ahead, and the average rate of speed up the Cromarty Frith did not exceed four miles an hour.

It was after midday when they turned into the river which led to the loch of the Wilderness. Lord Towyn recognized the stream by the description that had been given him, and unhesitatingly directed an advance. Sir Harold and Mr. Atkins had many misgivings as the sloop crept slowly up the river, a mere deep cut between high hills, their progress like the snail's, but they did not venture to express it to their hopeful and confident young guide.

As the stream grew narrower their misgivings increased, and the young Earl read their thoughts in their grave faces.

"Courage!" he said, approaching the Baronet. "It is true we barely creep along here, and the day is wearing on, but the yacht has had to go slowly here also, and cannot be more than an hour in advance of us."

"But, Arthur," suggested the Baronet, giving voice to his apprehensions, "suppose that the man of the yacht deceived you as to the proper route, or that we have taken the wrong course in running up this river? I can't believe that any one can make a cut in the hills like this one an approach even to a Highland stronghold. No wind can strike our sails, or so little, at any rate, that we could easily walk faster than we sail, if only we had a level road to walk on. And if we *are* upon the wrong tack, what will become of Neva, my poor wronged little Neva?"

His voice trembled as he asked the question.

"I know we are going straight to her, Sir Harold," said the Earl hopefully. "Believe and trust in my convictions. You may smile at the idea, but I feel that I am getting nearer and nearer to Neva with every inch we gain."

The night closed in early in that wild Highland region, a night of wind and mist. Not a light gleamed from the deck of *The Lucky*, as she felt her way between the narrowing rocks. About six o'clock of the early evening, she glided from the narrow river with a sudden bound, as a puff of wind filled her flapping sails, into the hidden loch of the Wilderness.

The yacht lay at anchor at the further side of the loch, and a mile away. A lantern hung at her masthead, and the forms of men were seen in the spectral glare, moving hurriedly to and fro on her deck.

"We have come to the right place, you see," said Lord Towyn exultantly. "This is the loch. Yonder lies the yacht, but recently come in. The men are busy unloading their purchases."

Sir Harold and Atkins swept the bold and rocky shores with their keen glances. The rugged steeps were black and bare, and in the dense gloom they saw no gleaming lights, no signs of habitation.

"We must come to anchor up in the deeper shadow of this overhanging cliff," said Lord Towyn.

The order was obeyed.

"Now lower a boat," said the Earl. "We will go ashore."

The boat was lowered; the two Macdonalds and the four passengers entered it, and the boat was rowed toward the yacht, keeping close to the black shore.

As they drew near, a row-boat was seen to shoot away from the yacht. The Macdonalds held their oars uplifted until the yacht's boat had grounded on the shore, and the three seamen belonging to the yacht had landed. Two of the three employes of Craven Black loaded themselves with hampers and parcels, and the third preceded them up the steep and circuitous path in the mountain side, bearing a lantern which he swung at his side.

"They are all gone up the cliff," said the Earl. "No one is left to watch the shore. Strike out, men. Let us land and follow them up the mountain. The man with the lantern shall guide us as well as his comrades."

To say was to do. The sloop's boat speedily grounded on the strip of beach, and Lord Towyn leaped out and sought for the entrance to the narrow path up which the three figures were slowly climbing, one still waving his light. The path was found. The Earl bade the boatmen wait, and the four men, Lord Towyn, Sir Harold Wynde, Mr. Atkins and Ryan, glided up the path toward the Wilderness like so many shadows.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

THE END OF THE GAME.

The yacht had arrived at the loch at the foot of Wilderness mountain just as the dusk was falling. Craven Black had immediately gone ashore in the mist and gloom, climbed the rugged steep, and hastened to his temporary home. The windows were all uncurtained, and a broad stream of watery light penetrated for a little distance into the darkness. There was no sound of barking of dogs, and the silence struck upon Craven Black's ears strangely. The front door stood wide open, but no one was in the hall.

He entered the house and looked into the drawing-room. Mrs. Artress was there, pale and perturbed, a restless spark in her ashen eyes, and disorder in her attire. She uttered an exclamation as she beheld Mr. Black, and sprang toward him, exclaiming:

"I am so glad you are come, Craven. Have you got the medicines for Octavia?"

"Yes. How is she?"

"I don't know. I am very anxious about her. She looks like death, and her breathing is very strange. She won't lie down, but just wanders about the house like some restless ghost. I think that her lungs are congested, and that she is in serious danger. I really think you ought to take her to Inverness and put her in a physician's care. What if she should die in this remote Wilderness?"

"She won't die while she is able to 'wander about the house,'" responded Craven Black lightly. "When people are seriously ill they take to their beds. Why are the dogs shut up?"

"Octavia ordered it. She could not bear their noise; it drove her wild, she said."

"Humph. Nervous. She will be better of her cold in a day or two. How is Miss Wynde?"

"She is still obstinate, Craven, and never says a word against her starvation diet. I am afraid we've made a serious mistake in our estimate of her. She is what you sometimes call 'game all through.' She'll die, but she won't give in. I wish we had let her alone, and allowed her to marry whom she pleased. That escapade of hers on the mountain may cost Octavia her life. And if Octavia dies, her four thousand a year dies too, and I shall have to become a companion to some lady, and lead a horrible life of dependence and fear, and you will have to go back to your precarious existence."

"You are a pleasant comforter," said Craven Black impatiently. "All these horrors exist only in your imagination. Octavia will outlive us all. Where is she?"

"In her own room."

Black ran up the stairs to his wife's room. He found Octavia standing before the fire, clad in a loose wrapper, whose bright hue made her pallid face look hideous. Her eyes were strangely large, and they were thrown into relief by heavy black circles under them. Her long black hair hung loosely down her back. She looked thin and old and spectral, all the brightness and beauty gone from her. Her features were hard in their expression, and the wicked soul declared itself plainly in her unlovely countenance.

Craven Black recoiled at sight of her. How two or three days had changed her! He felt a sudden repugnance to her. He had a horror of weakness and illness, and a fear came over him that his cousin's terrors might not be without foundation.

"Oh, it's you, Craven!" cried Octavia, in a thin, querulous voice. "How long you have stayed. Did you get my medicine?"

"Yes, here it is," and Black produced a bottle from his pocket. "It's a cough mixture."

"I feel such a tightness here," and Octavia put her hand upon her chest. "Such a horrible restriction. I dare say, though, it will be all right in the morning. I remember, Craven, you hate sick people. Your dinner is waiting. Let us go down."

"You had better go to bed," said Craven abruptly.

"I cannot lie down. My chest pains me when I attempt it. Had you good luck at Inverness?"

Craven Black assented.

"Did you see any one you knew?"

"No; how should I? None of my acquaintances come to the Highlands in November. I was as unrecognized at Inverness as I should be in Patagonia. I will change my clothes and take you down to dinner."

He went into his dressing-room and changed his garments. Octavia paced the room restlessly during his absence. He returned in the course of some minutes and escorted his wife down to the dining-room, where Mrs. Artress joined them.

He noticed that Octavia ate nothing at the meal. She complained of a lack of appetite, and moved restlessly in her chair, starting at every sound.

"I have read of the ancients placing a death's head at their feasts," said Black grimly, "and I seem to have followed their custom. Octavia, do try to look like something better than a galvanized corpse."

Octavia arose and went to the window, a spasm of pain convulsing her hard features. The heartless mockery of her confederate in guilt smote upon her in that hour of suffering like an avenging sword. How she had loved him, and had sinned for him! And this was her reward!

Craven Black finished his dinner quietly, and drank his wine. Then he arose with an air of gayety, and said:

"I have everything you sent for, Octavia, and some things you neglected to send for. We can stand a siege in this old house all winter, if need be. The boys are already bringing up the hampers. Will you have a look at them?"

Octavia assented with a heavy sigh, and passed out into the front hall with Craven Black and Mrs. Artress.

The three seamen stood in the hall, one with a lantern in his hand, the other two in the act of depositing their hampers upon the floor.

And over the edge of the plateau at that very moment, and not a score of rods distant, four men were coming silently and slowly, with stern faces and cautious mien, toward the house.

"That is right," said Craven Black, examining the hampers. "Bring up the wine baskets next."

The three men went out. The four pursuers stood in the shadow of the trees as they passed, and then resumed their approach to the dwelling.

"I'd like to see how the girl stands her imprisonment," said Craven Black. "I'll let her know that we are prepared to spend the winter here. By the way, Octavia, I posted that second letter to Brussels to-day, addressed, under cover of a letter to Celeste's sister, to Lord Towyn. We have nicely hoodwinked the Earl, and I should like the girl to know of our successful manœuvres. Where is Celeste?"

"In Neva's ante-room."

"Come then. We will visit our prisoner."

He went up stairs, Octavia following slowly, assisted by Mrs. Artress. Celeste sat at work in the ante-room of Neva's chamber, and admitted the visitors into Neva's presence, entering with them.

And outside the house, upon the lawn, the four shadows came nearer and yet nearer. They flitted up the steps of the porch, and in at the open door. They paused a moment in the deserted lower hall, and then, hearing voices above, came silently and darkly up the stairs, and paused at the door of the ante-room.

That room was deserted. The light streamed from the inner room, where Neva and her enemies were grouped. The sound of voices came out to the intruders. Softly, with sternly eager faces, the four crept across the floor of the ante-room, and two—Sir Harold Wynde and Lord Towyn—looked in upon the Blacks and their young victim.

The Earl breathed hard, and would have leaped in like a lion to the rescue of his betrothed and to the confusion of his enemies, but Sir Harold Wynde held him back with a grasp of iron. The Baronet meant to learn the falseness and perfidy of the wife he had so idolized and trusted, from her own lips.

And with what unconscious frankness she bared her guilty soul to his scrutiny! How completely she revealed her wickedness to him!

At the moment the intruders looked in with burning eyes upon them, Octavia was speaking. Neva stood up near the fire, very pale and slender and fragile of figure, as her father and lover saw with swelling hearts, but her red-brown eyes glowed with the light of an undying courage, her head was poised haughtily upon her slender throat, and her lips were curled in a smile of dauntless defiance.

"You see, Craven," Octavia was saying querulously, "We have starved the girl; we have fed her for weeks on bread and water, until her bodily strength must be nearly gone, and yet she stands there and defies us. What are we to do with her?"

"Miss Wynde does not sufficiently realize her own helplessness and our power," said Craven Black. "Your friends think you travelling with us upon the Continent, Miss Neva. I have posted to-day a letter apparently in your handwriting, under cover to a friend in Brussels, who will post it back to England. That letter is addressed to Lord Towyn. How he will kiss and caress it, and wear it in his bosom, never doubting that you wrote it. I shall send him another letter next week, in your name, breaking your engagement with him."

The young Earl made a slight movement, but Sir Harold held him still in a grip of iron.

Neva's pure, proud face flushed with scorn of her enemies.

"You may send as many letters as you please to Lord Towyn," she said haughtily, "but you will not deceive him so readily as you did me with that letter purporting to come from papa. Oh, Octavia, I am glad papa never lived to know you as you are, base, treacherous, and full of double-dealing! It is well for him that he did not live, for you would have broken his noble heart. He loved and trusted you, and you have repaid him by oppressing his daughter whom he loved."

The hard, haggard features of Octavia distorted themselves in a sneer.

The Baronet wondered with a sudden horror if this was the woman he had loved. She looked a very Medusa to him now.

"Your father! Your 'poor papa!'" mocked Octavia, with her hand upon her chest. "You have flung Sir Harold's name and memory at me ever since we came to this place. And what was Sir Harold? A mere Moneybags to me, that's all. If you hope to move me to pity you, you couldn't use a worse name to give effect to your appeal than the name of your father. I never loved Sir Harold Wynde, but I married him because he was rich. You needn't look so horrified. People marry for such reasons every day, but they have not my frankness to avow it. There stands the man whom I have loved for years," and she pointed at Craven Black. "It is his son whom I intend you shall marry—"

"To enrich you, madam!" cried Neva.

"Yes, to enrich me, since you say so!" exclaimed Octavia. "You have seventy thousand pounds a year; I have four thousand. I intend to equalize matters before you and I separate. Craven has just returned from Inverness with household stores sufficient to last us through the winter, and we shall stay here till spring, if necessary to compel you to accede to our wishes. Your fare, every day through this winter, until you yield to us, shall be bread and water. I warn you not to carry your resistance too far, for I may be moved to deprive you of a fire."

Neva's lovely face continued to glow with her haughty scorn.

"You seem to think that I am deserted by God and man, and completely given over to you," she cried. "You are mistaken. God has not deserted me. And I can assure you, Craven and Octavia Black, that before many weeks—before many days perhaps—Lord Towyn will trace me to this place and rescue me from your hands."

"Let him come!" sneered Craven Black. "Let him come!"

"Yes," mocked Octavia, "let him come!"

Lord Towyn broke from the grasp Sir Harold still held upon him, and stalked into the chamber.

With a shriek of delight, loud and piercing, Neva flew to his arms.

He held her clasped to his breast and backed toward the door, coming to a halt, looking at Neva's enemies with stern, accusing eyes.

Craven Black, Octavia, Mrs. Artress and Celeste stared at him appalled. Not one could speak, but Octavia's hand clutched at her chest with sudden frenzy.

"Lord Towyn!" gasped Mrs. Artress at last, faintly.

Craven Black broke forth into curses. His hand flew to his breast pocket, but fell again, as the door pushed open and Mr. Atkins and Ryan the detective entered the room.

"By Heaven, the game is up!" he cried.

"Yes," said our young hero, "the game is up. You have played a daring game, Craven Black, and you have lost it."

Octavia gasped for breath. The bitterness of defeat was almost more than she could bear. The sight of Neva in the arms of her lover nearly goaded her to madness.

"Yes, the game is up," she said hollowly. "I suppose that you traced Craven here from Inverness; but how did you get upon our trail? How did you happen at Inverness? No matter. I do not care to know just yet. You cannot prosecute us, Lord Towyn, if you care to preserve your bride's family name from scandal. I was Sir Harold Wynde's wife, and that fact must shield me and my friends. You cannot take from me my jointure of four thousand a year, and with that Craven and I need not suffer, especially as we have the Wynde Heights estate. The game is up, Lord Towyn, as you say, but we are not discomfited nor overthrown. You will keep silence for the sake of the family. Besides, you know I am Neva's personal guardian, and had a right to take her where I please."

"That remains to be seen," said the young Earl sternly. "Neva, darling, look up. I have news for you."

Neva slowly lifted her pale, joyous face from her lover's bosom, and stood a little way from him, eager, expectant, and wondering.

"My poor little girl!" said the young Earl, with an infinite yearning. "How you have suffered! I have brought you very startling news, and you will need all your bravery to bear it. Give me your hands—so! Neva, I have news from India."

Something in his tone startled the girl. Her face grew paler on the instant.

"Yes, Arthur," she said softly. "You have heard more about his death—poor papa!"

"A gentleman has come from India," said the Earl, telling the story much as Atkins had told it to him, "and he says—can you bear to hear it, darling?—he says that Sir Harold did not die out there at all: that he was attacked by a tiger, but was rescued by his Hindoo servant, who sent him away into the mountains in the care of other Hindoos, who kept Sir Harold a captive. And he says that Sir Harold is alive and well to-day."

"Oh, Arthur, Arthur! Can it be?" cried Neva, trembling. "My poor father! I dreamed that he still lived, and my dream has come true. We will start for India at once, and rescue papa. Oh, Arthur, do you think it is true?"

"Yes, my darling, I believe it."

"Well, I don't!" sneered Craven Black, turning pale nevertheless. "Such trumpery tales are common enough. Look at Livingstone. He's been said to be dead these several years, but every little while the newspapers resurrect him. I *know* Sir Harold is dead!"

"And I know it," scoffed Octavia. "Alive, after an absence of so long duration! Bah! I wonder you haven't more sense, Lord Towyn. Sir Harold Wynde alive! I should like to see him!"

The door swung slowly on its hinges, and Sir Harold Wynde walked into the room. He paused near the door, and surveyed his false wife with stern and awful eyes.

Octavia gave utterance to a frightful scream—whose horror was indescribable—and bounded forward, her hand upon her breast, and fell to the floor upon her face.

Sir Harold's awful gaze turned upon Craven Black, and seemed to turn that individual to stone. It rested upon Artress, and she cowered before it in terror. It passed over the French woman, and fixed itself upon Neva, softening and melting to almost more than human tenderness and love, and then, with a great joy shining in his keen blue eyes, he opened wide his arms. Neva sprang forward, and was clasped close to his great heart.

The sacred joy of that reunion need not be dwelt upon.

Presently, as Sir Harold was about to lead his daughter from the room, his glance rested upon the still prostrate figure of Octavia.

"Look to your wife, Mr. Black," he said; his irony arousing Black from his stupor. "She has fainted!"

Craven Black obeyed the voice of command, essaying to lift the prostrate figure of Octavia, but with a cry of horror he let it fall again, shouting hoarsely:

"She's dead! Octavia is dead!"

It was true. The engorged lungs had ceased their work. The heart had stopped its beating.

That night, the yacht and the sloop started upon their return to Inverness. In the former were Craven Black, dispirited and despairing; Mrs. Artress, full of bewailings for the poverty into which she was now plunged; the French maid; the dead body of the false Octavia, and the three sailors in Black's employ.

In the sloop were Neva and her friends.

The two vessels arrived safely at Inverness, and the remains of Lady Wynde were consigned to the grave. Craven Black did not wait to see the last rites performed for her who had served his wicked purposes so faithfully and so well, but, abandoning his cousin, put to sea in his yacht with the three sailors, not caring whither he went.

A week later, the wreck of the yacht was found upon the north German coast, and four bodies were washed ashore, two still living, two dead. And of the dead, one was identified, from the papers on his person, as Craven Black.

Sir Harold, with his daughter and his friends, returned to Hawkhurst. The story of Sir Harold's return to England had preceded them, and from the moment that the party alighted at the Canterbury station until after their arrival at their own home, Sir Harold received one continual ovation. The tenantry of Hawkhurst turned out in a body to welcome home their beloved landlord. The joy bells were rung in the little village of Wyndham, and guns were fired. It was a day long to be remembered throughout that part of Kent.

The shadow that had fallen on Sir Harold's life when he first learned the baseness of his second wife, was dispelled by the tender love and attentions of Neva and her young lover. The smiles came back to his lips and the joy to his heart, and he learned the lesson that many must learn, that life need not be all dark and desolate because one friend of the many has proved false.

A few months later the joy bells rang again, and again the tenantry of Sir Harold made merry. The occasion was the marriage of the heiress of Hawkhurst to the young Lord Towyn. It was a joyous bridal. Sir John Freise and wife, and their seven daughters, were there. Mr. Atkins' plain face beamed from the midst of the throng. Rufus Black and his gipsy-faced young wife, both happy and loving, had come down from Mount Street to grace the wedding, and no congratulations to the young bridal pair were more sincere than those uttered by Rufus.

At the wedding breakfast, while Neva, fair and proud, and radiant as a star, sat beside her equally radiant young bridegroom, Rufus Black found opportunity to speak a word privately to the bride.

"It has all ended as it ought to, Miss Neva—my lady, I mean," he whispered joyously. "Your father has got over his disappointment and grief, and looks like a king, as he stands yonder. I am getting to be a *man*—an honest, upright, strong-souled man, with genuine backbone and downright vim. Lally believes in me, you see, and upholds me, God bless her. And you and the Earl are as happy as angels, Miss Ne—my lady, and you deserve to be. Mrs. Artress is a governess—where do you think?—oh, divine justice!—in the house of the Blights at Canterbury! What worse could we wish her? Our enemies—they were mine as well as yours, Lady Towyn—played a daring game, and they lost it!"

THE END.

The following is the title of a new story by our distinguished contributor, Mrs. Lewis, the publication of which we shall commence in our next number:

A BONE OF CONTENTION;

OR,

THE WALDEMAR SUCCESSION.

Like all of Mrs. Lewis's stories, it is full of interest, and cannot fail to please our readers. Indeed, Mrs. Lewis's stories of English society are always popular. They are invariably republished in England—stolen from the *Ledger*, without credit.

THE NEW CUT.

The following has lain in my scrap-book for more than a score of years, but it is just as true and just as applicable now as it was in the earlier time:

An old clergyman, whose beadle was by trade a tailor, was returning from church with his man in company. This beadle was as old as his master, and had served him many years, and between the two a strong friendship, as well as mutual sympathy and understanding, existed.

"Thomas," said the clergyman, addressing his faithful officer, "I cannot tell how it is that our congregation should be getting thinner and thinner, while Saint Peter's is more than holding its own. I am sure I preach as well as ever I did, and I certainly have far more experience than I had when I first came among you."

"Indeed, sir," replied the beadle, with a meditative shake of the head, "now-a-days old ministers are like old tailors. My customers are dropping off also. I am sure I *sew* as well as ever I did, and the *cloth* is as good; but it's the *cut*, sir,—*it's the new cut that takes!*" C.

THE NEW YORK LEDGER

SONG OF A HAPPY WIFE.

BY WILLIAM ROSS WALLACE.

Oh, I am so happy! for he, my own mate,
With success as it grows but grows still more great!
When he thinks how, when over the toil of the day
He will smile with the news to our dear home say!

For no matter how brilliant his course in the mart
There is a raven richer still in his wife's loving heart.

And the joy of our children—the papa's return,
Makes the lamp on home's altar in perfectness burn.

If his work is not always rewarded as well,
If unfortunate seems now by a cent, a dispel,
Yet his spirit bears up, all determined to strive,
For he feels his own treasures are here safe for life.

And oh, how he, too, gives a balm to my cares!
How with sad disappointment so readily bears;
And I feel that the breath of good angels is round,
And that life for all evil will in Heaven be crowned.

Father Heaven, Oh, thanks that we met, and we
Have found such a treasure in finding each other!

That for us the same heart-reddled destiny grew,
From which children should spring, every one a true.

As they have, God's *fat* blessing in Home's as-
sured to us!

So, my husband, my husband, my own, my own mate,
Tell no pain me, or called at the first, his own
voice.

While to me, for the pressure and future afar,
Is the sunlight that makes the whole world bright!

MRS. ENTWISTLE'S STORY.

BY MARY KYLE DALLAS.

His name it was Skiver. It was a kind of a
stingy name, and he was a kind of a stingy
man. He was rich, and he was childless,
and he had no more last on his face than a
baby, and very little more on his head. Our
boy came into the back room, where I was
scouring cheerless one day, and says he:

"Mrs. Entwistle, there's a gentleman."

"I see him," says I.

"Is that why you're so cross?"

"Why don't you show him into the parlor?" says I.

"Why, he won't go," says he; "and he says he must see you for a minute."

"Oh," says I. "A bill, no doubt."

So out I washed, and there it stood; and I thought, as I looked at him, "I know you." And I did know him, though I never set eyes on him before, for your words goes to my heart like your eyes.

"Are you the lady of the house?" says he.

"I am," says I; "but if it's to subscribe to anything, with butter at the price it is, and sea-
son, and children's boots a-wearing out as fast as a shilling, I can't afford it, and that's the fact. I had a literary taste once, but it's all gone. I'm nothing but scrape and bot-
tom and coals and kindling wood inwardly, so don't show 'em to me and aggravate me by
one; don't, I pray. Subscriptions to books is for them that don't keep boarders."

"Mum," says he, "your words goes to my heart like your eyes do."

"What is your object then, may I ask, sir?" says I.

"Board, mum," says he.

"Well," says I, "I have a vacancy—but it's on the third floor."

"Any place will do for me," says he. "A
single gentleman, mum, is my case."

"Then you can't have it," says I, short and sharp.

"Perhaps he really is a lady," says I to my-
self; "I must look."

"Desired?" says I.

"Yes," says he. "She went off and left me on Wednesday night without my supper."

"Oh!" says I.

"She was a lady," says he, "a bother-like, if possible. Mum," would never have done such a thing. Mum's the word."

"The abandoned critter," says I.

"No," says he, "Skiver, sir, if such a most respectable woman; a lady, when I married her, as we supposed, and lived in splendor, and with a saving machine. Of course, mum, it
was her money."

"I should think so," says I, "and that fine-hearted woman's place is in her husband's home. Had you words?"

"She had a few, mum; a good many, I may say," said the genteel man. "Not I pardon my-
self. She had her reasons for leaving. If I was to tell you, mum, you'd be surprised."

"Not at all," says I. "She went off and left her cause. Men always do."

"As sure as my name is Skiver," said the gentleman, "I am as innocent as the babe un-
born. She would go out in winter, and was forever was free; but I didn't go much as mention it to her. Once I did, and she up and gave me for alluding to her—was only a hyacinth, and a pretty one it was, and she waved her handkerchief, and down it fell, and broke the
shin. The end has come at last," said left me."

"For leaving your boarders?"

"Thought it was during, you see," says he. "Oh," said I, "and I'm willing and able to pay; and as I can crawl into the bed, for me to sended with me, and it's all over."

"Oh, she'll come, back," said I. "Why don't you make her?"

"Make care to make do anything?" says he. "You don't know her."

"Then you'd best be out at my table with a few wretched countrymen and a poor lodger, plus, the cousin man that writes for the papers, for did ask me, to be sure, if he'd been sent there to be weaned," for he looked like it.

He sat bread and milk as if it was physic, and he never spoke to anybody; but I felt sorry for him, and I says to myself, I says, "I'll make sure that it was fond for him to be used so, and that Jane Amelia ought to be ashamed of her-
self, when I heard a knock at the street-door comes. I forgot to say that it was eleven o'clock at night, and I was pinning my shawl in the front basement. "Tap, tap, tap," it went, short and single, like a postman.

"Gracious!" says I. "What is that?"

"Mum," says he, "it's my wife, and I don't be afraid. Mrs. Skiver, sir, it's only a post-
man, how women like yourself."

I opened the door and found out. The
mean was bright, and there stood a woman in a decent cotton dress and a big apron and a little shawl and a sun-bonnet.

"Hey! I mean it?" says she.

"Who are you?" says I.

"Is my husband here?" says she, "a looking for a place, and I thought you was a washing a-
girl; and says I to myself, I'll offer before I go to another."

"I want a girl, to be sure," says I; "but can you read the word?"

"There's no work I can't do," says she, "and I bought a Dream-book and Fortune-
teller, only-spelling; and your own wages. What
is your terms, mum?"

"Reference?" says I.

With that she whips off her sun-bonnet, and stands under the gas.

"You just look at me," says she, "and then see if you want references. Don't look re-
sponsible."

I looked, and I hired her, and she came next morning.

She went about it in the big sun-bonnet, with a handkerchief about her face for tooth-
ache. And the cousin man used to say that she wasn't somebody in disguise. But she wasn't, nothing of the sort.

"Please'm, can you tell me who that strange lady-boarder was at the bottom of the table?" says she.

"Mrs. Dilbrey," says I. "You mean the one with the light hankercy?"

"No," says she. "A kind of a good-look-
ing gentleman, with no whiskers at all, and
fruit cheeks."

"Oh!" says I, "that is Mr. Skiver. He's
next door."

"A kind of a gay Lothario, ain't he?" says she.

"As to that, I don't know," says I. "Has he given you any impudence?" Because if he had he goes."

"Never looked at me," says she; "but no
doubt he's looked somewhere else that way. I
was with the lot of 'em, and that young Miss in
the front parlor, likewise."

"Perhaps you have something about him?" says I.

"No," says she. "How should I?"

"He's a gentleman that is separated from
his wife," says I.

"And came here and talked against her," says she.

"No, really," says I, vexed. "He's the liger-
ality himself. He spoke high of her."

"Oh," says she. Then she washed away for a while. And after a while, she says:

"Spoke high, did he? Ahh!"

She didn't speak again, until dinner-time, except about the work. Then I asked her at the table in her big sun-bonnet, she came out with a most astonishing story.

"It was a little more pudding," says she.

"One help of pudding ought to do board-
ers, says I.

"It's not Mr. Skiver. He didn't ask for it, but I know he's fond of pudding, and he hardly touched his meat, and I says to myself, I says, 'Mr. Skiver, sir,' says I, 'you didn't ask the gal. Looks low-spirited too. Give him my piece, Mrs. Entwistle, if you can't afford no more.'

"Such resentment isn't in me, Sally,' says I, 'last day,' and the other boarders see it, if not I can help."

That was the beginning of it. After that it

went straight on. Sally was as well-behaved
a woman as ever I met, otherwise; and she
kept her face covered up in her sun-bonnet,
and mostly her arms, and got in her pudding
chief too, in a way forward piece don't often
do. A pretty face, I dare say, and a good one
for a woman of her age. But it never plain on
to the boarders, and that was talked of here
and there.

Talk about pies! I pitied him; but I didn't
feel as she did. She thought things of that
sun-bonnet, and took 'em up to his door on a
tray, and "Sally" and "Sally" he called him
across windows shins, and set down and be-
gan to talk to him, and he got to like her
boots and brushed his coat, and got her to
cut to make him comfortable. And the fun
was she never took his eyes off of her face,
and she always said, "Mrs. Entwistle
your cook, sir," when she brought in the
trays. Other kind of conduct, I'd have
given her warning. But she have talked to her
as she was.

Then she went on for a spell, and every
Mr. Skiver was "Sally" and "Sally" was "Mr.
to the ladies," as Sally said; never seemed to
know Christian name. Then where should
"Old Sally," and the daughter called him
"Grandpa" and "Sally" and "Mr. Skiver" by
turns, the married lady that lived with us
was "Sally" and "Mrs. Dilbrey" in a word from
and our dear Sally sat down on a kitchen
chair, and pushed her sun-bonnet off, and says
she:

"Mrs. Entwistle, mum, that man is the
meanest man that I ever see. A miserly man,
mum. Give him shad for dinner!

"Well," says I, "if that's what come in, you
know to be fond of shad for breakfast."

"Says I," Sally, how can I afford it?"

"Oh," says I, "you can't be a-going hand
to bargain."

"Says I," Mortal man can't bargain down
fresh spring shad."

"Oh," says I, "let me what you can afford,
Sally."

And I did it. And I know the critter took
manner of his face to help itself, for the boys
never never stuffed and baked on any table.

When dinner was done, Sally was still
standing pooping in at the door, and though I
couldn't see her face, I felt sure she was a-
biting her handin in a rejoicing sort of way, and
I says to myself, I says:

"Let it alone, Sally, for a bit, and I'll
would go down."

And I went, and she meant Mr. Skiver. And I was sort of laughing to myself, when sudden-
ly up comes Mr. Skiver, and I heard a word about the room.

"Mrs. Entwistle," says I.

"Sir," says he, "shrub," said Mr. Dilbrin.

"There she went at shad."

"Then she went at shrub," said Mr. Dilbrin.

"Oh! oh! oh!" screams Sally.

"Oh, sir," says I.

"Oh, let me beat you on the back!" cries Sally.

"He's choking to death, I believe," said the
cousin man.

"Let me get at him!" says the lady from Hoxhame.

And there was Mr. Skiver black in the face.

"Run for a doctor," said Mr. Dilbrin.

And one of the boarders went, and Mr. Skiver was out of the room, Sally had Mr. Skiver on a
chair, and her finger into his throat, and he
said was screeching.

"Oh, sir," says I, "I'll tickle your throat!
Sing, or you're choking, and it will come out."

"Oh Lord! I cooked the shad! O gracious!
I bought it. O poor, gently gracious! I've
been the death of him! Gog, ducky diamond!
Gag, sir! Gag, sir!"

And up it did come, in a minute. And I
was glad of it, for I thought it was the end of
Sally, and I'm sure she was tucks down his
throat, as well she might.

I followed him to the door, and as he stood
all covered up by the big sun-bonnet as though
it had been a cow.

"Oh, Sally," says I, "where was your sense of modesty?"

All she said was to groan. And then there came another boarder, and there stood Mr. Skiver, as well.

"Mrs. Entwistle, mum," says he. "I've come to say a word."

"Well, sir," says I.

"I want you, mum," says he.

"Why, sir?" says I.

"It's owing to my feelings to mention it," says he, "but it's the conduct of that per-
son."

"Why was she singing?" says I, "but she did her best, sir. You are shaking?"

"Mum," says he, "I'd rather be choked to death than to be called any female's choicy diamonds, and the dear.

"I registered a vow, mum, when I was de-
serted by the female whose esteem I valued, that her unjust suspicions should never be
cast upon me again. And I've kept it, and I
mean to, however I could say. Miss Amelia
Jane I was, and true I remained. It was your
kind invitation, and I was only thinking of my
mum."

Now, behold, I am embraced, and called duck and dear, and choicy diamonds, believe, a table full of genteel people, to my self and the
case of a malicious turn of mind that would
say "Sally," by an effusion I'm you.

Oh, I

He blacker ended off with a hawt, and he was staring at something as I took a seat
glass.

It looked around. Sally had her bonnet off, and was standing up in the middle of the kitchen floor.

"Sally," says he again. "What do I see?"

"Your own Jane Amelia," says she, and throws herself into his arms.

"I came here to watch you," says she, "I
hired out for your protection, and I've tested
you, and I know you. There was a mistake
on my side, Lucius, and I'm sorry for it. Take
her to my heart, and we'll go home to-
morrow. I'll never doubt you any more."

Then, looking more like a baby than ever,
with the tears running down his face, he
looked over her shoulder at me.

"This is my wife, mum," says he.

"So I should imagine," says I, "and a big fool
she is, indeed of herself."

She didn't say anything, and they went away together; and I believe they've lived
in peace ever since. If she have, it's her
fault, for a better husband never lived, I do
believe, than poor Mr. Skiver.

SCIENCE.

The fact that a man can hold his naked hand for a short time in melted lead without pain has not conclusively been called a miracle of sci-
ence, but it is a fact. If the hand is wet, and the whole surface of the hand should be moist-
ened with water, the lead will not burn it. The lead is dazzled with the sudden cooling of the
flashes of those little bizarre globules as often
as they touch the hand, and the Leidenfrost drop in which case, says Mr. R. H. Compton, "we
have a drop of water which is prevented from boiling by the heat of the surface on which it
stands, and which, therefore, is not in contact
with the intense heat, and it forms a sort of thin
vapor cushion between the drop and the hot
surface." Readers, the well-known conjurer, tried
this in another form, after a description of it,
and he says that "the sensation of immersing his
hand in the molten lead was not unpleasant, but
rather cool."

Chollera has been very successfully treated,
it is said, by the injection of corrosive sublimate, and Hutchison, a village near Constantinople,
has been the scene of the trial of this remedy on a large scale. Dr. Chrestzonos was the attendant,
Dr. John Patterson of the British Seaman's Hospital, Constantinople, and Consul Longworth, described in the effect to check the disease than any
other remedy. Of 1,000 cases treated by this
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Even in the matter of washing clothes, the
progress of civilization can be seen in Europe. In
the Polar sea by Arctic explorers is of interest
to Americans, especially as it is a subject of
recent coinage in these Northern regions. The
Swedish explorer, Nordenskjold, who has just
returned from the Lena River, Siberia, has ex-
amined by barometers, and proven to be chiefly of
the same origin, and of a thousand more of them
from the shores of Northern Europe. The pearls
are found in the mussels of the rivers, and are
of a kind which attains to a large size. They are
belonged grew on the outermost limits of two
Siberian rivers, after